

A *Power*
L E N T E N M O N I T O R,
T O
C H R I S T I A N S,
I N
Pious Thoughts, Moral Reflections,
A N D
D E V O U T A S P I R A T I O N S
O N T H E
G O S P E L S,
For every D A Y in L E N T,
F R O M

Asb-Wednesday to Easter-Tuesday inclusive.

By P. B. O. S. F.

The T H I R D E D I T I O N.

L O N D O N :

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MDCCLXIX.



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T H E
P R E F A C E.

THAT the Institution of *Lent*, is of early Date in the Church, and to have been observed, in all Ages, from the Apostles Times; though with some Variation, both as to the Beginning and Manner of observing it, is sufficiently known to all who are any Thing conversant in the primitive Writers; and is too clear to be denied by any Thing but Prejudice and Novelty, which generally seeks to defend itself by crying down Antiquity, and the Practice of the earliest Ages.

As the Design of the following Sheets is altogether Moral, I shall suppose the Christian Catholick Reader, for whom I chiefly write these Reflections, to be sufficiently convinced of the Antiquity and Lawfulness of observing *Lent*, and shall speak of the Usefulness, and the Manner of observing this Holy and Apostolical Fast.

That Fasting is a Duty, and also very profitable and advantageous, is not to be denied without contradicting the Word of God; the Holy Scriptures frequently mention it as practised by the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Holy Men, in the Old Law. It is also recommended by the Example of Christ himself in the Gospel, who, immediately after his Baptism, retired into the Desert, and there remained fasting forty Days, and forty Nights, *Matt. iv.* and in his divine Sermon on the Mount, he gives Instructions in what Manner we should fast. He further speaks of Fasting, when, in Answer to a Question, why his Disciples did not fast, as the Disciples of St. *John Baptist* and the *Pharisees* did, he replied, that they did not fast then, because He, the Bridegroom, was with them; but that when he should be taken from them, then they should fast, *Matt. ix.*

If we look for particular Instances of Fasting in Scripture, and the Usefulness of it, we shall find many; and St. *Paul* says of himself; *I chastise and keep my Body under, lest while I preach to others, I myself, should become a Cast-away*, 1 Cor. ix. The Holy Fathers, in their Writings, are very large in their Commendations of Fasting and Mortification, and of the Usefulness of such Self-Denials; hence the Church, in her *Preface for Lent*, says; that *it represses and overcomes Vice*, by subduing and keeping under the Passions, and
irregular

The P R E F A C E.

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irregular Appetites, or Desires, which are, the Occasions of Sin: *It raises the Mind* from Earth to Heaven, and helps the Soul, with greater Ease and Facility, to contemplate God, and the sacred Truths of Religion; it is a great Nourisher of Virtue, and procures us heavenly and eternal Rewards. It is also of admirable Force and Efficacy to appease the Anger of God, caused by Sin, and to avert from us the sad Effects of his just Wrath and Indignation, as may be seen by the Example of the wicked King *Ahab*, 3 Reg. c. 21. against whom, and his whole House, God, by his Prophet, had denounced many severe Woes; yet, upon *Ahab's* Fasting and covering himself with Sackcloth, he so far reversed the Sentence, as not to execute it in his Time. This still further appears from the *Ninevites*, to whom God threatened, by the Prophet *Jonas*, utter Destruction, within the Space of forty Days; and afterwards spared them, on Account of their Fasting and Humiliation, *Jonæ* iii.

This Usefulness of Fasting, in general, proves the Usefulness of this Lenten Fast, appointed and ordered, by the Church, to be kept in Honour of our Blessed Lord's forty Days Fast, and to dispose ourselves by Fasting, Retirement, Prayer and penitential Exercises, the better to celebrate the approaching Solemnity of Easter: And from the End of its Institution, we may learn in what Manner Lent is to be kept.

As Lent is a penitential Time, designed for Works of Penance, and to obtain a Reconciliation with God, whom we have grievously offended by Sin, it necessarily supposes, in all those who desire to observe it as they ought, and with a true Christian Spirit, a sincere Repentance, which necessarily includes a Resolution to avoid all Sin, and the Occasions of it, for the future. This is so necessary a Condition to a due Observance of this Apostolical Fast, that to abstain from Flesh, and not to abstain from Sin, is but to deceive ourselves, and mock God.

Secondly, Lent being designed as a Time of judging, condemning and punishing ourselves; it is the Christian's Duty in this holy Season, to call himself to a strict Account, and to examine into the State of his Soul, that he may see how his spiritual Affairs stand. For this Reason, to his Fasting he is to join a more than ordinary Retirement, and separating himself from vain Amusements, Pleasures and Diversions, in the Retirement of his Closet, to examine his Conscience, and from the Discovery he there makes, to condemn himself to voluntary Penance for his Sins. If we judge and condemn ourselves, we shall not be judged and condemned by God. The Sight of our innumerable and daily Failings; our Ingratitude to God, and the many Sins whereby we have offended him, and provoked his Justice; with the terrible Consequences, if not prevented by
Repentance,

Repentance, and Amendment, will oblige us to cry out; *Spare thy People, O Lord*, Joel ii. and make us, in order to obtain the Pardon we desire, observe this Fast according to the Spirit of the Church, and with as much Strictness, as is consistent with our Health, and the Constitution of our Bodies; not seeking to indulge our Appetite, by delicate and costly, though Lenten Food, and by nice Varieties, elude the Intention, and pious Design of the Church, which now calls all her Children to the Exercises of Mortification, Penance, and Self-Denial, which supposes a great deal more than a bare abstaining from Flesh-meat.

Thirdly, this holy Time being peculiarly set apart for good Works, which ought ever to accompany our Fasting, another Duty at present to be observed, is Prayer and Devotion. Prayer is always joined to Fasting, in holy Scripture. They may be said to be represented by the two Cherubims which covered the Mercy-seat, in the Ark of God, *Exod. xxv.* Fasting and Prayer are the Wings of the penitent Soul, by which she ascends to the Mercy-seat on High, and there makes her Peace with God. Prayer then ought to have a great Share in the Employments of this Season. We should be very constant and exact in our private Devotions, and let them be longer, and more frequent than at other Times, where the Circumstances of our Station afford us Leisure. A more constant Attendance upon

the Public Service of the Church, in hearing Mass, and Sermons, is now also required of us, as far as the Circumstances of Place, and our Conditions will allow. This particularly regards those, who, by the favourable Dispensations of Providence, are Masters of themselves and their Time. Such ought to be ashamed to fling away all their leisure Hours, in vain Amusements and idle Diversions, especially during this holy Season. As for the poorer and labouring Men, who are obliged to work for their Living, they are to accept of and submit to the Toil and Hardships of their State in a Spirit of Penance, and may offer them up as so many penitential Exercises, in Satisfaction for their Sins, and thereby making a Virtue of Necessity, may reap no small Advantage from their daily Labours.

To Prayer and Devotion, must likewise be joined Alms-Deeds, and Charity to the Poor, according to every ones Ability and the Condition he is in. As for those who are not able to give large Alms; they may supply the Want of that by other Acts of Charity, as visiting the Sick, comforting the Afflicted, making Peace among their Neighbours, and reconciling Differences. These are all excellent Charities, and very proper Exercises for this holy Time, and from which few, or none, can plead any Exemption, or pretend a Want of Ability.

Finally,

Finally, as the mortifying our Passions, the correcting ill Habits, improving in solid Virtue, a Contempt of the World, the Love of God and heavenly Things, is the chief and great End of the Church's instituting this forty Days Fast, all our Exercises and Endeavours are to tend to this, without which, a meer Fasting, or abstaining from Flesh-meat, will be of little Profit to us. For if we continue to be vain, proud, and worldly-minded; if we are careless and negligent in the Service of God; if we mind nothing but Pleasure and Diversion, and give ourselves up to Passion, Anger, Intemperance and Excess; to Deceit, Fraud and Injustice, what Advantage can we propose to reap by abstaining from Flesh? It is true, we may answer one End of the Church, and comply with one Part of her Precept, by not eating what is prohibited; but the chief, and great End of all is certainly neglected and transgressed, and such will be found at the End of Lent, not only to have lost the great Advantages they might have reaped, but also to have brought upon themselves an additional Load of Guilt, by thus abusing these pious Institutions.

Such, most certainly, are all those, who have no further Regard at all to Lent, than making a Distinction of Diet, and while they abstain from Flesh, think themselves at Liberty to regale their Appetite with all other Niceties, with sumptuous, and most costly Dinners, and at whose Tables may be seen, in a

Time designed for Penance and Mortification, Prodigality and Profuseness, more becoming an *Asian* Luxury, than the sober Reflections of Christian Penitents. Such likewise are those, who spend their Time in, and eagerly run after vain Diversions, Comedies, Balls and Masquerades; who neglect Prayer, spiritual Reading, hearing the Divine Word, and frequenting the Church: Such also are they who are ever grumbling, and complaining of the Hardship of the Restraint laid upon them by the Church, and seeking Exemptions from it without any just or reasonable Cause, and where they are legally exempted from Fasting, or eating Fish, exempt themselves from all other penitential Duties of this holy Season. Such again are those who are ever studiously enquiring into the utmost of what may be allowed, as to the Quantity and Quality. For this, though it shews an Unwillingness to transgress, yet, also shews a Mind too much bent upon indulging the Appetite more than can well consist with true Mortification and Penance. In a Word, to consider the End of its Institution, will be the best Direction how to observe this Fast, as far as we have that in View, and endeavour to answer it, so far we may be said to keep Lent well, and as we ought; and thus observed, according to the Spirit of the Church, it will prove advantageous to us, but where it is not observed in this Manner, and no farther, than by a Distinction in the Quality

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of our Diet, little Benefit can be expected from it.

Thus far of the End, and Manner of keeping Lent. As for the following Reflections on the Gospels, they are designed as Entertainments for the devout Soul, during this Holy Season, and may, not only instruct her in her Duty, but also help to raise her Heart to God, in suitable and proper Affections. I am sensible, several devout and learned Pens have exercised themselves this Way; and we have, in our *English* Tongue, excellent Books of Instructions and Devotions for Lent.

Nevertheless Variety may be, not only agreeable, but profitable likewise. It is with the spiritual, as with the corporal Taste. What one admires, does not so much please another. All Food is good, and wholesome, but every one does not equally like the same Sort, nor does all equally agree with every one. Hence every one is at Liberty to choose what he likes, and what best agrees with him. It is, and ought to be the same in Books of Devotion. Let every one take, and use that which best suits with his Spirit, and which he finds more beneficial to him. There are indeed, a great many Books of Devotion and spiritual Instructions published, and all tend to one and the same End, all are writ with one and the same Intention, to instruct us in our Duty to God, and to guide us to that Happiness we are all made for; and while they seemingly lead us different Ways, it is only, by a pleasing Variety,

riety to render the Journey agreeable, and to suit our different Stations, Capacities, and Inclinations. As for the following Reflections, I hope there will be nothing found in them but what is conformable to the Spirit and Doctrine of the Catholick Church; to whose Judgment and Censure, and that of my Superiors, I do humbly and sincerely submit them.

P. B. O. S. F. A. D. 1769.

A S H.



ASH - W E D N E S D A Y.

On the Blessed Ashes.

*Memento Homo, quia Pulvis es, et in
Pulverem reverteris.*

Remember Man, that Dust thou art,
And into Dust thou shalt return.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

THE Ceremony of this Day, in
sprinkling Ashes on the Heads of
the Faithful, is instructive and sig-
ficant. We are now entering
upon Lent, a Time set apart for
Fasting, Prayer, Mortification and Self-denial.
By these penitential Exercises, we are to endeavour to make our Peace with God whom we have offended by Sin ; and to seek a Reconciliation with him, by those Means which are most likely to procure Mercy from him. Receiving Ashes upon our Head, we are to appear before him in the Posture of Penitents, and if we accompany the outward Ceremony of the Day, with suitable interior Dispositions of the Heart, with a due Sense of our Sins, and a sincere
Sorrow

Sorrow and Contrition for them, in true Repentance and Purposes of Amendment, we then answer the End of the Church, in this Day's Ceremony, and shall reap the Advantage of it, in that Mercy and Pardon we are to seek. But without such interior Dispositions, we shall find little Benefit from receiving the Blessed Ashes; and however we may do, as others do, and join in the Ceremony of the Day, yet we shall only draw upon ourselves that severe Reproach God made to the *Jews*, by his Prophet, *Isaias* xxix. *This People honours me with their Lips, but their Hearts are far from me.* Such, undoubtedly, do those Christians, who in Appearance, honour God, by taking Ashes, and joining in the Service of this Day, but without those interior Sentiments of Sorrow for past Sins, and Resolutions of Amendment, which God and his Church require of them. To such the holiest and best Institutions are of no Advantage, while they refuse, or neglect to observe them as they ought.

A further Instruction we have from the Ashes of this Day, is a seasonable Memento of our Mortality. This is admirably expressed in the Words the Priest uses when he puts the Ashes on our Heads; *Remember Man, that Dust thou art, and to Dust thou shalt return again.* An excellent and useful Admonition, designed to put us in Mind from whence we came, and to what we must again return, and which deserves our most serious Attention. Dust we are; no more; from that we drew our Origin, and
that

that will be our last End ; into that our Bodies must be resolved. However, here we may indulge a haughty Pride, be fond of ourselves, and admire our own Beauty, Strength, and fine Parts ; alas ! Dust we are, no more, no better, and into Dust we must return.

The haughty Monarch, whose imperious Frowns make so many Thousands tremble ; on whose Beck the Lives and Fortunes of so many depend ; and who spreads the Terror of his Name into distant Realms, is but Dust ; from Dust he came ; and, like the meanest Slave, shall return to Dust, and bury all his Glory and Power in the Grave. The Rich and Wealthy, whose affluent Fortunes cause them to be so much courted and admired ; who know not what it is to want any Thing they desire, and seem here to flow in Happiness, may, from this Day's significant Ceremony, learn how little Trust is to be put in Riches. For Dust they are, and into Dust they shall return. That beauteous Face, those fine Eyes, that charming Mein, wherein all the Graces seem to dwell, and is so much, so fondly admired, alas ! it is but a little painted beauteous Dust. From the Dust of the Earth it was formed, and must be crumbled into Dust again. Humbling Thought ! how admirably fitted to pull down our Pride, and abate the Conceit we are too apt to have of ourselves ! The Rich and Mighty, are equally Dust with the Poor and Indigent, and, with them, must share an equal Fate. Death knows no Difference, he
seizes

seizes all alike, Old and Young, Rich and Poor, High and Low, are all equally subject to him. And as all Men are Dust, so all shall return to Dust again.

This Lesson the Church reads us this Day; she sprinkles Ashes on our Heads, and bids us remember what we are, and to what we must again return. The Inference we ought to draw from this is, to be careful to prepare ourselves for Death, for the Time when we must return to that Dust from whence we came. This ought to be our greatest Business and Concern at all Times, but is an Exercise peculiarly suitable to the Season we are now entering upon; and for this Reason, the Church begins her solemn Fast of Lent with this significant Ceremony, to put us in Mind of our Mortality, and that we may now seriously apply ourselves to the grand Affair of our Salvation. That when Death comes, we may be found ready and prepared, and that, when the Body returns to Dust, the Soul may ascend up to Heaven, and there be received into the Society of the Blessed.

A S P I R A T I O N S.

O thou eternal Author of all Things! thou sovereign Lord of Life and Death! imprint in my Mind the Remembrance of what I am, and of my last End. Let me frequently reflect that I must die. This is the Sentence thou hast pronounced upon all Men, nor do I wish for, or seek an Exemption. I submit to thy
wife

wise Decrees, O Disposer of all Things, and am truly content that my Life and Death are at thy Disposal. In thy Hands are the Moments of my Life. Thou hast told me I must die, but hast mercifully concealed from me both the Time when, and the Manner how. This thou hast done, to preserve me from a false and dangerous Security, and that I may be, at all Times, ready, when called by thee. I bow down, O Lord, and adore this Disposition of thy merciful Providence, and submit to thy Will in all Things. One Petition I humbly make, and, O may thy Goodness vouchsafe to grant it! Take me not from hence with my Sins unpardoned, and before I have reconciled myself to thee. Make me fit, dear Lord, for thee, and then take me to thy Self, in thy own due Time. May I now, in this Season, so prepare myself by Works of Penance, as I may hereafter find Mercy at thy Hands.

May I now begin to live to thee, by daily dying to myself and the World. I must die one Day, and be eternally separated from all Things here. How little Reason have I to be fond of what I cannot enjoy long, and know not how soon I may be deprived of! Must we die? Yes, we must die. How necessary then is it, that we should prepare for it. My God! I acknowledge this Necessity, and humbly beg thy Grace to do it.

Withdraw, dear Lord! my Heart and Affections from this World, and make me to fix them only on thee. O may I constantly, in
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all my Works, remember my latter End, and prepare myself for it by the constant Exercises of a holy Life! Then shall my happy Soul one Day reap the Fruits of it, and sing with Joy and Triumph, O Death, where is thy Sting? O Grave where is thy Victory? Since, by dying, I have gained Heaven and a happy Eternity. Then shall I for ever sing a Hymn of Praise and Thanksgiving to thee, O thou bounteous Author of eternal Happiness! and bless thy Name through all Eternity.

The G O S P E L. St. *Mat.* vi. 16.

WHEN you fast, be not as the Hypocrites, of a sad Countenance; for they disfigure their Faces, that they may appear unto Men to fast. Amen I say to you, that they have received their Reward. 17. But thou when thou dost fast, anoint thy Head, and wash thy Face. 18. That thou appear not to Men to fast, but to thy Father who is in Secret; and thy Father who seeth in Secret, will reward thee. 19. Lay not up to yourselves Treasures on Earth, where the Rust and the Moth consume, and where Thieves break thro' and steal. 20. But lay up to yourselves Treasures in Heaven, where neither Rust, nor Moth consume, and where Thieves do not break through, nor steal. 21. For where thy Treasure is, there is thy Heart also.

R E-

R E F L E C T I O N S.

In this holy Gospel Christ gives to his Disciples, excellent Instructions about Fasting, and as whatever Instructions he gave to them, belong equally to all Christians, the Church reads them to her Children at this Time, as a useful Admonition at the Beginning of Lent, that, instructing them how, and in what Manner, they are to observe this apostolical Fast, they may so discharge themselves of the Duties incumbent upon them as not to deprive themselves of the Benefit of this holy Institution.

Our blessed Lord, in the first Place, gives a necessary Caution against all pharisaical and hypocritical Affectation in Fasting, a desiring to be taken Notice of by others, and commended for it. This was the Fault of the *Pharisees*, and for which they were condemned by our Saviour, as placing all the Merit of their Fasting in exteriour Gestures and Signs. Therefore, Christ bids us, as to our outward Appearance, not make any Alteration that may seem to proceed from Affectation and Vanity, a dangerous Worm, which will devour all the Fruit of our good Works, and make them nothing worth.

Having given this Caution against Pride and Hypocrisy in our Fasts, Christ exhorts us so to fast, as our heavenly Father may accept and reward us for it. We are now called upon, by the Church, to the annual Observation of
Lent,

Lent, and by a forty Days Fast to expiate the Excesses and Sins we have been guilty of. We are called now to do Penance, and reconcile ourselves to God, whom we have offended: And for that End, should be careful to observe this holy Time, according to the Spirit of the Church, and with the Dispositions of true and sincere Penitents. This is what the Apostle calls the acceptable Time, the Day of Salvation, *2 Cor. vi.* The Ministers of God, now as so many Baptists, exhort us to fly from the Wrath to come, and to bring forth worthy Fruits of Penance, *Matt. iii.* It is by a true and sincere Repentance, joined to our Fasting, that we must render it acceptable to God: For if we have no other Regard to the present Time, than making some Difference in our Diet; we shall be far from keeping such a Fast which God requires, and the Church has instituted. The Fast which God has chosen, is to loose the Bands of Iniquity, to convert ourselves to the Lord with all our Hearts, in Fasting, Weeping and Mourning, *Joel ii.* to rend our Hearts, by true Contrition and Sorrow for our Sins, and not our Garments. To all such God has promised Mercy and Pardon: And for this the Church calls us at present, from our usual Liberties and Freedoms, to the Exercises of Mortification and Self-denial; to greater Retirement and Recollection, to more frequent Prayer, spiritual Reading, Alms-Deeds, and Works of Charity: And herein, has no other View than our Interest and Advantage. How un-

unhappy then must those Christians be, who neglecting, or making no Account of any Thing thus instituted for their Benefit, go on in their usual, careless and negligent Way, and while they comply with the Letter of the Church's Law, in outward Fasting, have nothing of the Church's Spirit; and instead of doing Penance for their Sins, rather add Sin to Sin, by the Abuse of the Remedies and Mercies now offered!

Not so the good Christian, the true Son of the Church. He endeavours to enter into this solemn Time, with a due Sense of the Advantages to be reaped by it; he calls to Mind the Excesses and Negligences he has been guilty of, and now condemns himself to the wholesome Penance of Self-denial; he obliges himself by Diligence and Fervour, to regain what he has lost. Sensible of the Weakness and Corruption of his frail Nature, how apt his Passions are to gain the Mastery over him, if not kept under by a prudent Restraint, he now flings the Bridle over them, and endeavours to calm and subdue them. He enters thoroughly into the Spirit of this holy Season, and observes it according to that Spirit. And this all should do; every one ought to keep Lent in this Manner, that so they may reap that spiritual Benefit designed by it.

Consequently to this, we may observe, a useful Advice our blessed Saviour further gives us in this Gospel, when he bids us lay up to ourselves Treasures in Heaven. Lasting Treasures

fures, which no outward Force, or Violence, no secret Fraud, or any Accident can deprive us of. By laying up Treasures in Heaven, is meant the Exercise of good Works, which will follow us beyond the Grave, and prove Seed sown upon good Ground, producing a plentiful Harvest. Whereas all the Care and Pains we take, when only for this World, will prove to be of no Advantage to us. And this is a very proper Season, a fit Time for to lay up these heavenly Treasures. When, by Fasting, Prayer, and Self-denial, by Works of Mercy and Charity, we may, not only cancel past Obligations and Debts contracted by former Negligence and Carelessness, but also increase our Store, lay up in Bank, and procure to ourselves a Fund that will never fail.

This is what the Church now recommends to all her Children, in this Day's Gospel. For this, she lays before them, in the most pressing Manner, the Necessity of laying hold of this acceptable Time; and exhorts every one, by her Ministers, not to put off, nor delay a sincere Conversion. But to turn to the Lord our God, and to seek him while he is to be found. To seek him in a sincere and humble Manner; the only sure Way to find him, who for our Encouragement, has promised to hear us when we call upon him, and to be found when thus we seek him.

A S P I R A T I O N S.

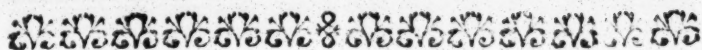
It is thus I desire now to seek thee, O God. For this, I now humble myself before thee, in a deep Sense of my past Ingratitudes, and the ill Use I have hitherto made of thy Mercies. I desire now to seek thee, in Prayer and Fasting, that I may obtain Pardon of my Sins, which have separated me from thee, my Lord and my God. Perfect what thou hast begun in me, and help me, by thy Grace, to find thee. Having found thee, dear Lord, by a sincere Repentance; let me never lose thee again, by relapsing into my former Follies. I now come to thee, as to the only Physician of Souls; from thee I seek a Remedy for all my Evils, and a Cure for those many Distempers I am afflicted with. I come to thee, who art the Way, the Truth, and the Life. May I never more err, or go astray from that Way which leads to thee. Thou art the unerring Truth, and I believe in thee, and hope by a right Faith and due Obedience to thy holy Law, to obtain at thy Hands eternal Life. Thou hast graciously promised to hear those who call upon thee, hear then my Prayers, and mercifully grant what I ask, to the Glory of thy holy Name, and the eternal Benefit of my Soul.

How often, O my gracious and merciful Lord, hast thou heard me! How often hast thou granted my Request, and healed my sick
and

and sinful Soul ! And, alas ! what ungrateful Returns have I made to thy Goodness ! My God ! I am covered with Shame and Confusion at the Sight of my daily and monstrous Ingratitude. Still continue thy Mercy to me, O Lord, give me now true Sorrow and Contrition for my Sins, and Grace never to offend thee more.

Ah my God ! the Love thou hast for me, makes thee thus bear with me, and shall I not love thee again ? O Love divine ! come and inflame my Heart and my Soul, that I may burn with Love of so gracious and loving a God. May I constantly and for ever love thee, O thou true and only Life and Happiness of my Soul ! I will love thee and thee only, O thou only worthy Object of Love. For the Love of thee I will die to the World. I will crucify the Flesh with all its Concupiscences. For the Love of thee I will deny and mortify my own Will. I will fast, watch and pray. I will do Penance here that thou mayst spare me hereafter.

THURSDAY



T H U R S D A Y

Before the First *Sunday* in *Lent*.

The G O S P E L, St. *Matt.* viii. 5.

AND when he had entered into *Capharnaum*, there came to him a Centurion beseeching him, 6. And saying; Lord my Servant lieth at Home sick of the Palsy, and is grievously tormented. 7. And *Jesus* saith to him, I will come and heal him. 8. And the Centurion answered and said, Lord I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my Roof; but say the Word only, and my Servant will be healed. 9. For I also am a Man under Authority, having Soldiers under me, and I say to this; go, and he goeth: And to another; come, and he cometh; and to my Servant, do this, and he doth it. 10. And *Jesus* hearing this, marvelled, and said to those that followed him; Amen I say to you, I have not found so great Faith in *Israel*. 11. And I say to you, that many shall come from the East, and from

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14 Thursday before the first Sunday in Lent.

the West, and shall feast with *Abraham*, and *Isaac* and *Jacob* in the Kingdom of Heaven: 12. But the Children of the Kingdom shall be cast into the exterior Darknels; there shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth. 13. And *Jesus* said to the Centurion: Go, and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And at the same Hour, the Servant was healed.

REFLECTIONS.

The Evangelist Saint *Matthew*, in this Relation of the Centurion's speaking to *Jesus* Christ in Behalf of his sick Servant, and of his Humility in acknowledging himself unworthy that Christ should enter his Roof; of his Faith in believing that he could heal his Servant by a Word; and the Effect of this Faith in the Recovery of the sick Man, gives us many excellent Instructions, necessary and useful at all Times, but particularly applicable to the present Season, wherein we ought to make appear in our Behaviour, the same Virtues, in some Degree at least.

The Centurion thus beseeching Christ in Behalf of his sick Servant, is an excellent Representation of a penitent Sinner desirous to be reconciled to God. We are all of us, alas! Sinners, and the Church earnestly desires to see us true and sincere Penitents, and now invites us to go to *Jesus* Christ, and beseech him in Behalf of our Souls grievously sick, and in a dangerous Way, by Sin. To encourage us
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to go, and to assure us of Success, she lays before us the Example of this *Roman Officer*, who as soon as he heard that Jesus was come to *Capharnaum*, immediately went to him, and laid open the Necessity of his Domestick. *Lord, my Servant lieth at Home sick of the Palsy and is much tormented.* If we desire, or have any Regard to the Health of our Souls, afflicted and lying dangerously ill under the Pressure of many evil Habits and vicious Customs, now is the happy Time, *Jesus* our spiritual Physician is come down to *Capharnaum*. We have now Opportunity of having Recourse to him. We must not delay. Let us not think it a slight Matter, which may be put off and postponed to another Time, for now is the Time when he calls upon us, and if we refuse to go now, we may be deprived hereafter of a Time to go in.

The compassionate Saviour of the World, told the Centurion, that he would come and heal his Servant; who immediately replied; *Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my Roof.* Excellent Spirit of Humility! and which, to render ourselves and our Petitions acceptable to God, must always accompany them. Nothing will sooner prevail with God, to grant the Pardon and Mercy we seek, than an humble Acknowledgement of our Miseries and Unworthiness. *The Prayer of the Humble shall pierce the Clouds*, Eccles. xxxv. and be heard by him, who resisteth the Proud, and giveth Grace to the Humble, S. *Jac.* iv. Let

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us humble ourselves then, in the Presence of God, and confess before him how unworthy we are; and say sincerely with this Centurion; *Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my Roof. Command with a Word only, and my Servant shall be healed.* He argued very justly from himself being one of so much Authority, as to say to his Servant; *Do this*; and it was done, that Christ's superior Power need only speak, and that his Word was of sufficient Efficacy to cure his Servant. *Command with a Word only, and my Servant shall be healed.*

Faith and Confidence in God, are no less necessary than Humility. If we desire to obtain Pardon of our Sins, we must firmly believe that God is both able and willing to forgive them. As no Sin is greater, nor more injurious to God, than Despair in his Mercy; we must be careful not to put any Obstacles to his Goodness, by our Diffidence in it. Our best Defence is the Shield of Faith, and always to have a firm Confidence in him, and to which he thus encourages us, saying: *As I live I desire not the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he be converted and live.* Ezek. xxxiii. And our blessed Saviour thus graciously invites us; *Come unto me all you that labour, and are burdened, and I will refresh you,* Matt. xi. What greater Encouragement can we desire? Let us go then to him, now in this holy Time, let us go with the Humility and Faith of the Centurion, and with him we shall be accepted.

Go,

Thursday before t^e first Sunday in Lent. 17

Go, and as thou hast believed, be it done unto thee; and at that very Hour the Servant was healed. Happy Effect of a lively Faith! The same happy Effect will be found by all those sincere Penitents who in this Manner have Recourse to God, who will mercifully say to such; *Son, be of good Heart, thy Sins are forgiven thee, Matt. ix.*

A S P I R A T I O N S.

O Jesus, Saviour of the World! speak those comfortable Words to my poor Soul! Ah, dearest Lord, behold I am sick and infirm, grievously tormented and sorely troubled. But speak the Word only, and I shall be healed. Thy Power is great, and thou art able, thy Mercy is also great, and thou art willing to forgive. Pardon then my Sins, and free me from the heavy Burden of them. I acknowledge my Unworthiness, and I have just Reason to fear and apprehend. But I will trust in thy infinite Goodness. I cannot offend more than thou canst forgive; and I do firmly believe, there is no Sin so great but thou wilt pardon it upon a sincere Repentance. Say then to me, as thou didst to the Centurion in the Gospel; *Go, and as thou hast believed, be it done unto thee;* and from that Moment my Soul shall be healed, and I will praise and glorify thy holy Name.

18 *Thursday before the first Sunday in Lent.*

O thou true and only Physician of Souls ! may thy holy Name be for ever blessed and praised by all Creatures ! May all poor Sinners, who, like me, have experienced thy Goodness, be grateful to thee. And, O may I never forget the Favours thou hast shewed me, nor any more abuse thy Bounty. Preserve me, dear Lord, from relapsing into Sin, or falling again into these Evils thou hast delivered me from. May I daily endeavour to please thee, and to increase in thy Love. I desire to love thee above all other Things, and all other Things only in thee and for thee. I can only be happy in loving thee ; and am truly miserable when I do not love thee. May thy sweet Love wholly possess my Heart and my Soul here, till I come to possess and enjoy thee in Heaven hereafter.

FRIDAY

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F R I D A Y

Before the First *Sunday* in *Lent*.

The G O S P E L. St. *Matt.* v. 43. vi. 1.

YOU have heard it hath been said ; thou shalt love thy Neighbour, and hate thy Enemy. 44. But I say to you ; love your Enemies, do good to those who hate you ; and pray for those who persecute and calumniate you : 45. That you may be the Children of your Father, who is in Heaven ; who maketh his Sun to rise upon the Good and the Bad, and raineth upon the Just and the Unjust. 46. For if you love them who love you, what Reward shall you have ? Do not even the Publicans do this ? 47. And if you salute your Brethren only, what do you more ? Do not also the Heathens do this ? 48. Be you therefore Perfect, as also your heavenly Father is Perfect. C. vi. 1. Take Heed that you do not your Justice before Men, to be seen by them ; otherwise you shall not have a Reward

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from your Father, who is in Heaven. 2. When therefore thou givest Alms, do not sound a Trumpet before thee, as Hypocrites do in the Synagogues, and in the Streets, that they may be honoured by Men. Amen I say to you, they have received their Reward. 3. But when thou givest Alms, let not thy Left Hand know what thy Right Hand doth: 4. That thy Alms may be in Secret, and thy Father who seeth in Secret will repay thee.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

This Gospel is taken from our Blessed Saviour's Divine Sermon on the Mount, wherein having declared, that he came not to destroy the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfil and perfect them; he here shews wherein he does that, and to how much higher a Degree of Perfection he raises the Christian Institute, above the Law of *Moses*. The sublime Perfection of the Gospel wonderfully appears in those extensive Precepts of Charity here delivered, and no less in the Manner, wherein Christ would have us bestow our Alms, and perform our Works of Mercy to the Poor; he says to us: *Love your Enemies, and do Good to those who hate you.* However hard, or difficult this Command may seem to our corrupt Nature, so prone to bear Malice, and seek Revenge, yet it is a positive Command, nor is there any being a Christian, or Disciple of Christ, without observing it. It is not a
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Counsel, but a Precept, and carries with it the distinguishing Character of a Disciple of Jesus Christ. Though it appears hard and difficult to Nature, yet by the Assistance of Grace it will become easy and pleasant. Christ here requires nothing of us, but what we may perform, assisted by his Grace, and of which he has given us an admirable Example in his own Person. We have also the Examples of *Joseph* in Regard of his envious Brethren; *David* in Regard of *Saul*; the Apostles, *St. Stephen* the Proto-Martyr, and innumerable other Saints. This is the great Perfection of the Christian Law, or Gospel. If we love only our Friends, and those who deserve our Affection by their friendly Offices, we do no more than the *Jews* or *Heathens*. Therefore says Christ to us; *Be you Perfect as your heavenly Father is Perfect*; by loving your Enemies, forgiving Injuries, and doing Good to those who hate you.

This is to be observed by all Christians, because it is the Command of their Divine Master. To this may be added, the Regard we ought to have to our own eternal Interest, which very much depends upon the Practice of this Duty. Christ has positively said, that unless we forgive others their Trespases, our heavenly Father will not forgive us ours, *Matt. vi. and vii.* and has further assured us that the same Measure we give to others, shall be given to us again. For this Reason we are taught to say, in the Lord's Prayer; *Forgive us our Trespases, as we forgive them that tres-*

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pass against us. Wherein we desire God to forgive us, no otherwise, than as we forgive others. So that when we say this Prayer, and at the same Time bear Hatred to any one, and refuse to pardon him his Offences, we do, in Reality, desire of God that he would not forgive us our Sins. This, alone, seriously considered, ought to make us not to hate any one, but readily and sincerely to forgive all those who have offended us.

This is that Christian Spirit of Charity, which does not allow us to be Enemies to any one; and by which we ought so to live, as to prevent, as much as possible, any ones being an Enemy to us. If there be any, who, either with, or without Reason will be our Enemies, our Duty is always to shew a Readiness and Desire of Reconciliation, that at least we may discharge what is required of us. As this Time of Lent is a Time when Christians are supposed and invited to go to the Altar more frequently, and with more than ordinary Devotion, in attending and being present at the Church's Service, they must be careful to do it in the Spirit of sincere Charity, as they desire to render themselves and their Devotions acceptable to God.

Having settled this Precept of Charity in its most noble and perfect Branch, our blessed Saviour proceeds to another Part of it, that of giving Alms, and showing Mercy to the Poor, and gives us excellent Instructions for this Duty, which, according to our Ability, ought
ever

ever to accompany our Fasts. When we give Alms, we must not do it with Pomp and Show, to draw the Eyes and Commendations of others upon us, lest all the Merit and Reward of them evaporate and be lost in the Smoke of Vanity and Pride. Alms given with the Sound of a Trumpet, make a great Noise below, but will never mount up, nor reach Heaven. Private Charities are more acceptable to God, and beneficial to ourselves, as being more safe and secure. Nor need we require any Witness of what we do: it is enough that God sees us, who can and will reward us. Yet we are not to take these Words of our Saviour in the strictest literal Sense, as if by them, public Charities or Distributions of Alms to the Poor were forbid and condemned, for such may be given without any Mixture of Pride or Vanity. They may be performed with a pure and charitable Intention, and then, not only edify our Neighbour, but are also pleasing to God. St. Gregory gives us in this Regard an excellent Rule, and reconciles the seeming difference between giving Alms in Secret, and doing our good Works before Men, that they may be edified and glorify God. “ What we do, let “ us so do it, says he, as not to seek, or desire human Applause. Let the good Work be done publicly, but so, as the Intention may be secret, that we may, by our good Works, give Example to others, and stir them up to do the same; and yet by our pure Intention, seeking only to please God, “ desire

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“ desire they should be known only to him.”
By this we may secure ourselves from Pride
and Vanity, and observe both these Injunctions
laid upon us by our Divine Master. *S. Greg.
Hom. 11. in Evang.*

ASPIRATIONS.

O *Jesus* my adorable Master, give me Grace
to obey thee, and to observe thy holy Precepts.
I will in Obedience to thee, love my greatest
Enemies, and do good to all who hate me.
For the Love of thee, I sincerely forgive all
those who do me any Manner of Wrong or
Injury, and for every such Injury, I desire
thou wouldst bestow upon them, some special
Grace and Favour here, and a particular De-
gree of Glory hereafter.

My God and my Lord! give me, I beseech
thee, a pure Intention, that in all I do, I may
seek nothing but thy Honour and Glory, and
desire that my good Works may be known to
thee alone. Preserve me from all Vanity and
Ostentation, that I may condemn and slight the
Praises of Men, nor ever seek, or wish to be
esteem'd by them. Ah, my God! all the
Praises they can give, cannot make me better
than I am. What I am in thy Sight, that I
am, and no more. Let me choose to be little
in the Eyes of Men, and great in thy Sight,
for in that alone, true Greatness and all Vir-
tue does consist.

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O my Soul! what is all this World but empty Nothing? and what can we expect from it? Shall we, to please that, and to gain its poor Applause, hazard the Loss of God's Favour, and to be approved by him? May I never, O my God, be guilty of so great a Folly. Whatever I do, I will do it with a pure Intention, and to please thee only. Thy Love, and thy Favour is all that I ask, and all I will seek for. Let the World condemn me; may every one slight me. If I am approved by thee, it will be more than enough, and I shall be abundantly happy. This is the Happiness I seek for, and for this will I labour and strive, by loving and serving thee to the End of my Life, and for thyself alone.



S A T U R D A Y

Before the First *Sunday* in *Lent*.

The G O S P E L, *St. Mark* vi. 46.

AND when he had dismissed them, he went up to the Mountain to pray. 47. And when it was late, the Ship was in the Midst of the Sea, and himself alone on the Land. 48. And seeing them labouring in rowing (for the Wind was against them) and about the fourth Watch of the Night, he cometh to them walking upon the Sea; and he would have passed by them. 49. But they seeing him walking upon the Sea, they thought it was an Apparition, and they cried out. 50. For they all saw him and were troubled; and immediately he spoke with them, and said to them; have good Heart, It is I, fear ye not. 51. And he went up to them into the Ship, and the Wind ceased. And they were far more astonished within themselves. 52. For they understood not concerning the Loaves: for
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their Heart was blinded. 53. And when they had passed over, they came into the Land of *Genesareth*, and drew to the Shore. 54. And when they were gone out of the Ship, immediately they knew him. 55. And running through that whole Country, they began to carry about on Beds, those who were sick, where they heard he was. 56. And wheresoever he entered, into Towns or into Villages, or Cities, they laid the Sick in the Streets, and besought him that they might touch but the Hem of his Garment; and as many as touched him were made whole.

REFLECTIONS.

Nothing can better represent the constant Labour and Toil, and the continual Disappointments of a worldly Life, than the Description the Evangelist here gives of the Apostles labouring against contrary Winds, in the Absence of their Divine Master. Christ had wrought an illustrious Miracle, and fed five thousand Men with five Loaves, and two Fishes, after which he obliged his Disciples to go into a Ship, and cross the Water before him to *Bethsaida*, while he dismissed the Multitude, and then retired to a Mountain to pray. The Disciples in Obedience to his Orders went into the Ship; which being in the Midst of the Sea, and the Winds contrary, they could not bring to the Shore. They laboured hard, but in vain, till *Jesus* came to them about the fourth Watch

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Watch of the Night, and entering into the Ship the Wind ceased, and they soon arrived at their desired Landing-Place

This World is with Reason compared to a Sea, and all Christians, as Christ's Disciples, are obliged to pass over it, that they may arrive at the Haven of eternal Happiness, but without his Assistance, find insuperable Difficulties, and by the Winds which are against them, unable to advance towards the Port, remain tost about in the imminent Danger of being lost in the Midst of this vast and wide Sea. Such are all those, who though they are in his Ship the Catholick Church, yet may be truly said to be without the Company of *Jesus*, as not living by his Spirit, nor according to the Maxims of the Gospel, bounding, as I may say, their Desires, and employing all their Care and Concerns for the Things of this World, as Riches, Honours and Pleasures, in vain tend to, or think to arrive at Happiness, while the contrary Winds raised by such irregular and inordinate Affections, hinder them from making any Advances towards the heavenly Port. This will easily appear true, if we consider the Opposition and Contradiction there is between the Spirit of Christ, and the Spirit of the World. We may indeed row, and labour at the Oar of some external Show of Religion, some outward Forms of Piety, but shall never be able to advance, unless *Jesus* is with us by his Spirit of Humility, Self-denial,

nial, Contempt of this World, and a Love of heavenly Things.

Worldlings, indeed, are not willing to believe this; or that all their Solitude and Care for the Enjoyments of this Life, is no other than rowing against the Wind; seeking Happiness there, where it is not to be found, tho' Experience demonstrates the Latter, as Religion teaches the Former. The Numbers of such are very great in this Age of Coldness and Indifference, and wherein, though much, very much is said, and talked of Religion, yet little, very little is shown in the Practice.

This being so, what has the sincere Christian to do, but to beg of *Jesus* to be present with him, that under his Protection, and by his Assistance, he may be able to bear up against the Storm of contrary Winds, for such he must expect to meet, nor think to sail over this vast Sea without meeting Opposition. And from the Case of the Apostles, in this Day's Gospel we may learn, not only the Difficulties and Dangers of a worldly Life; but also, that a Life of Virtue and Piety is not exempt from many severe and hard Trials. Christ ordered his Apostles to go on Board the Ship, and to pass the Water without him, though he knew the Difficulty they would find, and the Trouble they would meet, this he did, not only to let them see how necessary his Presence was to them, and how little they could do without him; but, likewise, to try their Faith, and prove their Confidence in him. He was corporally

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porally absent, but present with them in Spirit. They rowed and laboured, but could not get the Ship forwards, the Winds being contrary, nevertheless he preserved them from receiving any Harm, and hindered the Winds from hurting, or oversetting their Vessel. In this Condition they remained several Hours, when about the fourth Watch of the Night, he appeared walking on the Sea. They were frightened at the Sight, supposing it had been an Apparition, but he soon calmed their Fears, and the Moment he entered the Ship, the Storm ceased, and they got to Land. Admirable Representation of the Conduct which God sometimes observes towards his most faithful Servants! He sometimes seems to leave them to themselves, and to withdraw his Presence from them, at least as to any sensible Proof or Feeling of it. He leaves them as it were to struggle alone against the contrary Winds of Difficulties, and Obstacles which they meet, and are not able of themselves to overcome, tho' they labour and strive, but seemingly to themselves, make no Advances, or get their Ship forwards. This he does out of Kindness to them, and by this, lets them see how little they can do of themselves; and how absolutely they must depend upon the Assistance of his Grace. By this he would teach them Humility, not to trust or rely upon their own Strength, but upon him, who, though he thus absents himself from them, will return again. He will appear, when they least expect him, and by his
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Appearance calm their Fears and Apprehensions. In a Moment he will make the Winds be still, and guide the Vessel safe into the desired Port.

This Consideration will be of great Comfort to us under all the interior Desolations and Darkness our Souls may sometimes be in, and will help us to bear up under all Opposition we meet, either from the World, or our own frail and corrupt Nature. One of the principal Lessons we are to learn from the Gospel of this Day, is to put our Trust and Confidence in God, not to despond, or think ourselves abandoned, when we do not sensibly perceive the Presence of Christ with us. He sees and beholds us, and knows the most proper Time when to appear to us; which he will do, and say to us, *It is I, be not afraid.* 'Till he shall please thus to visit us, we must, like the Apostles, continue labouring and rowing, that is, we must continue to do our best, and what we can, nor grow tired or weary. We must leave the Time and Manner of his Visitation to himself. We may earnestly cry out: *Lord save us. Come Lord Jesus, come quickly;* but we must add, in thy own Time. Thy Will be done, not mine.

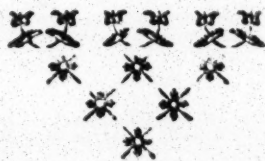
A S P I R A T I O N S.

It is thus I now desire to call upon thee, O Saviour of my Soul! Behold me, Lord, in the vast Sea of this World, directing my Course to thee. But, alas! the Winds are contrary, the Sea is rough, and though I labour and row, yet I cannot get forwards. No wonder, Lord, if thou art absent, or leavest me to myself, and to my own Weakness. O come and appear, manifest thyself to me, and show the Power of thy Grace, in quieting all those Storms raised by my unruly Passions. Calm the Winds, and cause them to cease. Say to the Sea: *Be still.* Thy powerful Word can lay the most violent Storm, and if thou appearest, and dost enter my Vessel, it will soon arrive at the wished for Haven. All my Trust and Confidence is in thee, and I humbly resign myself to all the Dispensations of thy holy Will. Let me not be lost in the Hurry and Tumult of worldly Affairs, and in the too eager Pursuit of the Things of this Life. Let me not be immoderately busied about many Things, when one Thing is only necessary. To love and serve thee.

This, O my God, I will consider as my only and truly necessary Affair, and to which all other Things shall give Place. In loving thee I shall be happy, but truly miserable if I do not love thee. Thou commandest me, dear Lord, to love thee: Give me what
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thou commandest, and command what thou pleasest. Thou hast made my Heart for thee, may it ever be unquiet till it rests in loving thee. O endless Source and Fountain of Love, let those sweet Streams of Love flow upon my Soul that I may be wholly absorpt in thy Love.



FIRST



FIRST SUNDAY in LENT.

WITH this *Sunday* the Church properly begins her great and solemn Lenten Fast. The four Days before, from *Ash-Wednesday*, being taken in to supply for the *Sundays* in *Lent*, on which Days we are exempted from Fasting, and obliged only to Abstinence. In this Lenten Fast we are to honour, by the Observance of it, our Blessed Saviour's forty Days Fast in the Desert. Hence the Gospel of this *Sunday* is of the Fasting and Temptation of Jesus, as related by St. *Matthew*: And the Church begs for us in her Prayers this Day, that being purified by a right Observance of Lent, we may obtain what, by fasting and penitential Labours, we desire. It is our Duty to join our Intention and our Prayers to hers; to observe this holy Institution according to her Spirit, that we may reap the spiritual Profit designed for us by it. If, as we ought, we keep this Point in View during Lent, it will be the best Rule we can follow in the Observance of it.

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The GOSPEL, St. *Matt.* iv. 1.

THEN *Jesus* was led by the Spirit into the Desert, to be tempted by the Devil. 2. And when he had fasted forty Days and forty Nights, afterwards he was hungry. 3. And the Tempter coming, said to him: If thou be the Son of God, command that these Stones be made Bread. 4. Who answered and said, It is written: Not in Bread alone doth Man live, but in every Word that proceedeth from the Mouth of God. 5. Then the Devil took him up into the holy City, and set him upon the Pinnacle of the Temple: 6. And said to him: If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down; for it is written; that he hath given his Angels Charge of thee; and in their Hands shall they bear thee up, lest perhaps thou dash thy Foot against a Stone. 7. *Jesus* said to him, it is written again; thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. 8. Again the Devil took him up unto a very high Mountain, and shewed him all the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them. 9. And said to him: All these will I give thee, if falling down thou wilt adore me. 10. Then *Jesus* said to him: Be gone Satan! For it is written, the Lord thy God shalt thou adore, and him only shalt thou serve. 11. Then the Devil left him; and behold the Angels came, and ministered unto him.

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R E F L E C T I O N S.

However wonderful soever it may appear, that Jesus Christ should retire into the Desert, there to be tempted by the Devil; however bold and insolent it may seem in that Rebel Angel, thus to attack the Son of God; yet, if we consider the Design of our blessed Lord in thus permitting himself to be tempted, we shall discover a more wonderful Effect of his Love and Goodness in our Regard; as it was not for himself, but for our Instruction and Advantage, that, after his Baptism in the River *Jordan*, he was led by the Spirit into the Wilderness, and remained forty Days and forty Nights in Prayer and Fasting; and being afterwards hungry, suffered the Devil to tempt him. This he did for our Instruction, and from thence we may learn, 1. To fly from the World. 2. To mortify and subdue our Passions, and thereby be the better able to resist and overcome the Temptations we must expect to meet from the Devil, who, like a cunning Enemy, watches to attack us with Advantage, and when he may either surprize our Negligence, or prevail upon our Weakness.

To fly from an Enemy, when we are superiour to him in Strength, or of equal Force, is a Mark of Cowardice, and Want of Courage; but to retreat from one more powerful than ourselves, and who has great many Advantages over us, is not Cowardice, but Discretion,

cretion, acting according to the Rules of Prudence; to secure ourselves by a timely Retreat, is much better, than, rashly and with Temerity, to expose ourselves to the Hazard and ill Consequences of an unequal Combat. Such an Enemy, the World on many Accounts may be esteemed, and therefore our greatest Security from the Dangers of it, is by retiring from it. But by retiring from it, here is not meant, a total abandoning and separating from it, like the ancient Fathers in the Desert, or those who are called by God to the Retirement of a Cloister. Such a Retreat is of Advantage to those who aspire after Perfection in a contemplative Way. As for those who are in an active State, and whose Calling and Station is to live in the World, and amidst the Incumbrances of it, to serve God, and secure their Salvation, the Retreat they are recommended to make from the World is of another Nature, a Solitude of the Heart; a Retirement of the Spirit, by drawing the Mind and Affections from being too much bent upon, and too much attached to the Enjoyments of this World. Though to these, a corporal Retreat and Retirement from the Hurry of worldly Business, or vain Amusements, at some particular Seasons, as in this holy Time of Lent, as far as the Circumstances of every ones State and Leisure will permit, is here recommended from the Example of our Saviour, it being of infinite Advantage, now and then to steal into Solitude, for a Day or

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more, and therein to look over our spiritual Affairs, and examine into the State of our Souls. The best and most regular Clocks sometimes want to be taken to Pieces, to be brushed and cleaned from the Dust which they insensibly gather: In like Manner, the greatest Zeal sometimes cools; and the most regular Liver slips into some practical Errors and Mistakes; to cure which, and rekindle the Fire of Devotion, Recollection and Retirement, are the best Helps: But a Retirement of the Spirit is absolutely necessary for all, and to which we may be induced by these two great Considerations. First, that the World is not only full of Danger, and almost insuperable Difficulties, which render Salvation extremely difficult to be secured therein; but also, under the Appearances of Satisfaction and Delights, covers the greatest Crosses and Disappointments; and in Pursuit of which the Mind is continually unquiet, agitated by the most cruel and different Passions; ever seeking what it can never find, which affords no other Consolation than the wretched Pleasure of changing. Miserable Comfort, not to be able to free the Mind from a present Uneasiness, but by a succeeding one!

Another Consideration to induce us to fly from and abandon all Affection to the World, is that pursuing the Ways of the World, is no other than treading the Paths of Death, and walking in the Broad-Way which leads to everlasting Misery. It is a Truth delivered by the
sacred

sacred Oracles of Jesus Christ, that to be saved we must fly from and quit the World, if not in Effect, at least in Heart and Desire. To be saved we must carry our Cross, deny ourselves, and follow Jesus Christ in the narrow Path of Penance and Mortification. But alas! how can this be done, by following the World, and governing ourselves by its Maxims? Let us not deceive ourselves. The Gospel we profess to believe assures us, that no one can serve two Masters; that we cannot serve God and Mammon, *Luke xvi.* As God alone is the Author and Fountain of all Good and true Happiness; let us seek it no where but in him, and his Service. In the World nothing is to be found, but Trouble and Disappointment, uncertain Satisfaction here, and the Cause of everlasting Misery hereafter, let us fly from and abandon it. Though in the Midst of it, by our necessary Affairs, and the Duties of our Calling or Station; let us not be corrupted by it, but preserve our Heart, by a Solitude and Retirement of Spirit, wherein alone our Security consists, and which is thus recommended to us by the Example of *Jesus* our Master.

Another important Truth we are taught by the Fasting and Retirement of our Saviour in the Desert is, to mortify and subdue our Passions, that we may be the better able to resist and overcome the Temptations we are exposed to in the World. The Son of God not only retired into the Desert, but there mortified himself by the Rigours and Austerities of a long

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Fast, not for himself, but for us, and for our Example. To make us understand, that it will not be enough for our Security, to retire from the Vanities of the World, we must further mortify and keep our Passions under, otherwise they will become Masters, and reduce us into the most cruel Servitude. If we give to the Flesh and its Desires, we shall weaken the Spirit, and render ourselves unable to resist and overcome the Attacks of our Enemy. By pampering and nourishing the Body to Excess; by indulging the Appetite, and gratifying our sensual Inclinations, we minister Fuel to the Fire of Concupiscence, and furnish our Adversary with Arms against ourselves. We have little Reason to think, or hope to overcome the Temptations to which we are daily exposed, by a Life of Ease, Softness, and Sensuality. A Life very little corresponding to the Character of a Christian, or the Maxims of a Gospel, which, every where, exhorts us to Penance and Mortification. For this the Church calls us now to the Observance of Lent, thereby, in some Measure, to copy after the Example of our Divine Master, who when the Devil tempted him to change Stones into Bread, replied: *Man liveth not by Bread only*; to give us to understand that though Bread, or corporal Food, be necessary for the Body, yet, as that is but Part, and the less noble Part of Man, it is not that alone we should seek after, nor let the Care of our Body be the greatest or principal Part of our Endeavours. As the
Soul

Soul is more valuable than the Body, it is that which we must be most careful and solicitous for; and which being continually exposed to the Assaults of its Enemies, we must endeavour to preserve by a right Use of all those Means which God has furnished us with for that End. Nor will those Enemies be able to prevail against us if we are not negligent, or wanting to ourselves. The Devil may assault and tempt us, as he did our Saviour, but he cannot force us; he can only solicit and importune, he cannot oblige us to commit Sin. God has given us Liberty, endowed us with Free-Will, and offers us the Assistance of his Grace, by which we may reject all the Temptations of the Devil, who, if we resist him, will fly from us, as he did from Jesus Christ.

A S P I R A T I O N S.

How much am I bound to bless thy Goodness, adorable Saviour of Mankind! Thou didst retire into the Desert; thou didst fast and pray, and didst permit thyself to be tempted by the Devil, that I might also overcome him. Lead me, dear Lord, into an internal Sollicitude, and let me fly from the Vanities and Dangers of the World. May I never rashly thrust myself into Danger, nor fall a Prey to my Enemy, by my Weakness and Imprudence. Let me die to the World, that I may live to thee; and for thy Love, despise and condemn all the Enjoyments of this Life.

O fill my Soul with those seraphick Flames, which may burn up, and consume all earthly Desires. Thou art the only true Happiness of my Soul. Thee only do I wish for, and after thee only do I seek. Here will I mortify and keep under all my irregular Passions, that they may no more rise in Rebellion against thee, or cause me to transgress thy holy Law.

O Jesus, my adorable Saviour! if the Devil had the Boldness to attack thy incomparable Sanctity, thy invincible Force, thy consummate Virtue, what is it that he will not undertake against me? poor, weak, and feeble as I am. O Divine Jesus! what can I do against an Enemy so powerful and equally crafty? I know, O my God! that thou wilt not permit this Enemy of my Soul to tempt me beyond my Strength. I can always vanquish him by the Assistance of thy Grace, and this thou art always ready and willing to give me. O Jesus! victorious Conqueror of Sin and Death continually help and assist me. Defend me from this roaring Lion. May I be safe from his Fury under the Cover of thy Wings. O infinite Bounty! open the Treasures of thy Mercy. Help my Weakness and assist me, that I may combat with Courage and Resolution, till I gain a compleat Victory over all the Enemies of my Soul, to the Honour and Glory of thy holy Name, sweet Jesus, my God and my All.

M O N D A Y



M O N D A Y

In the first *Week of Lent.*

The G O S P E L, St. *Matt.* xxv. 31.

AND when the Son of Man shall come in his Majesty, and all the Angels with him, then shall he sit upon the Seat of his Majesty. 32. And all Nations shall be gathered together before him, and he shall separate them one from another, as a Shepherd separateth the Sheep from the Goats: 33. And he shall set the Sheep on his Right-Hand, but the Goats on his Left. 34. Then shall the King say to them that shall be on his Right-Hand; come ye blessed of my Father, possess you the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World. 35. For I was hungry and you gave me to eat, I was thirsty, and you gave

me to drink, I was a Stranger, and you took me in : 36. I was naked, and ye cloathed me ; sick, and you visited me ; I was in Prison, and you came to me. 37. Then shall the Just answer him, saying ; Lord, when did we see thee hungry, and fed thee ? thirsty and gave thee to drink ? 38. And when did we see thee a Stranger, and took thee in ? Or naked, and cloathed thee ? 39. Or when did we see thee sick, or in Prison, and came to thee ? 40. And the King answering, shall say to them : Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least Brethren, you did it to me. 41. Then shall he also say to them, who shall be on his Left-Hand : Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting Fire, which was prepared for the Devil and his Angels. 42. For I was hungry, and you gave me not to eat, I was thirsty, and you gave me not to drink. 43. I was a Stranger, and you took me not in, naked, and you did not cloath me, sick, and in Prison, and you did not visit me. 44. Then shall they also answer him, saying : Lord, when did we see thee hungry, or thirsty, or a Stranger, or naked, or sick, or in Prison, and did not minister to thee ? 45. Then shall he answer them, saying : Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it not to one of these Least, neither did you it to me 46. And these shall go into everlasting Punishment, but the Just into Life everlasting.

R E F L E C T I O N S .

Among all the Truths of the Christian Religion, none requires more our serious Consideration, and to be frequently the Subject of our Meditation, than the last Judgment; a Forgetfulness of which, and a Neglect to prepare for it, will be of the most terrible and dangerous Consequence. The Church, this Day, reads for her Gospel, the Account which Jesus Christ himself gives of the Proceedings of the last Day, the Manner of his coming to Judgment, and the different Sentences he will then pronounce upon the Wicked and the Righteous. This she does at the Beginning of this holy Season of Lent, that by beholding the Terrors of that Day, and having in our View, the strict Judgment we must then undergo, we may be the more careful to improve the favourable Opportunity we now enjoy; be stirr'd up to a sincere Repentance for our past Sins; and exercise ourselves in those Works of Mercy and Charity which alone will be able to give us any just Confidence, and render us able to appear before our Saviour when he shall come to judge and reward all Mankind according to their Deserts. Let us enter at present into these pious Sentiments of the Church, and entertain our Thoughts with reflecting on the Manner of our blessed Lord's coming to Judgment, and those great Transactions wherein

every one will be concerned, every one bear a Part.

The first Coming of our blessed Saviour was in great Humility and Poverty. This Appearance was in Mercy, to save the World. But his second Coming will be in Justice, to judge and condemn the World; and this Appearance will be in great Glory and Majesty. He will then appear like himself, the Son of God, attended by all the Powers of Heaven, as so many Ministers to execute his Orders. Then shall the dreadful Trumpet sound, and pierce the silent Graves with an awful, *Rise ye dead and come to Judgment.* All Mankind shall then rise, and every one appear before the Throne of God, every one be placed according as their Merits entitle them, either on the Right or Left-Hand. The Just, as so many innocent Sheep, on one Side, and the Wicked, as so many stinking Goats, on the other. Then will be brought forth that large and tremendous Volume, wherein are marked down all our Thoughts, Words, and Actions, of which a strict and severe Account must be rendered; and according to what we have done in this World; how we have lived, and how we have died, we shall then be either approved or condemned. The Just and Righteous shall then meet with a public Approbation of their Piety, and be invited by Jesus Christ to eternal Happiness, in Reward of their good Works; but the Wicked shall hear the terrible Sentence of their Condemnation, and be doomed to suffer
eternal

eternal Misery in Punishment of their Crimes, and for not having practised Charity and good Works to others.

Here we may observe the Order of this Judgment; in the first Place our Saviour will address himself to the Just, and invite them to Heaven and Happiness. This will be a great Addition to the Confusion of the Wicked, when they shall see those, whom, heretofore, they so much scorned and contemned, now exalted so far above them, and called to eternal Happiness, while themselves are condemned to the dreadful Flames of Hell for ever. To them Christ will say, with a terrible Voice; *Go ye Curst into ever lasting Fire.* No sooner shall this Sentence be pronounced, but the unfortunate Wretches will sink into the bottomless Pit, there to remain in Torments for ever, while the Just shall ascend up in Joy and Triumph, and reign eternally in the Kingdom of Heaven.

A further and useful Observation we are to make on this last and general Judgment, is the Causes here given, by the Judge, for the Approbation of the Just, and Condemnation of the Wicked. Our Saviour does not here say; *Come ye blessed of my Father,* because ye have believed in me, and professed the Christian Religion; but because *I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat, &c.* and having done it to one of the least of these my Brethren, ye did it to me. From whence it evidently appears, that Faith alone will not justify us; but to Faith must

must be joined good Works, and a practical Piety; and that, as we perform Works of Mercy and Charity to the Poor, we do them to Christ himself, who will thus reward him at the last Day. In like Manner, Christ does not reproach the Wicked with a Want of Faith, nor condemn them for not believing his Gospel; but for a Want of Charity, and not joining the practical Part of Religion to their Belief, and tells them, that having refused Mercy and Charity to the Poor, they refused it to him. This is the sad Cause of their Condemnation, while trusting to an empty Faith, an outward Profession of Religion, they neglect and wilfully omit the practical Duties of it. For which Reason, as knowing their Master's Will, and not doing it, they shall be beaten with many Stripes, *Luke xii.* and suffer the dismal Effects of their Folly and Impiety.

This being so; what have we to do, but to take Care of ourselves, and now while we have Time to do good, as the Apostles advises, *Gal. vi.* and for this End frequently to consider the last Day, and how we shall then be able to appear before our sovereign Judge? O that we were wise, and would consider these Things, for though we may now hear, or read of them, as Things afar off; yet they will certainly one Day arrive, and perhaps sooner than we imagine. When they come, we shall find ourselves deeply concerned: The Wicked will then earnestly wish to have re-
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pent in Time, and wish in vain, for a little Time to repent in. The Use we are to make of these Reflections, is to resolve to be careful how we live; to do Penance for our Sins, and to exercise ourselves in Acts of Charity and good Works, as what alone will secure us, when, at the last Day, our eternal Lot will finally be decided, and we be either rewarded or punished, according to what we have done in this World.

A S P I R A T I O N S.

O thou sovereign Judge of all the World, and before whom all Mankind shall, one Day, appear! Strike my Soul with a wholesome Fear of thee, and thy Judgments. I tremble, Lord, when I think of that strict Account I must one Day give, and I desire to appeal from the Bar of thy Justice, to the Seat of thy Mercy. I implore Pardon for my past Negligences, and beg the Assistance of thy Grace to amend. Thou hast called me to the Knowledge of the true Faith; let me be ever careful to adorn that Faith with good Works, and showing Mercy to the Poor, according as I am able. Give me Grace to show myself here a good and faithful Servant, that when thou shalt come, and call me to Account, I may be approved, and rewarded by thee. Let me daily have before my Eyes the Account I must render, that I may never grow negligent, or slothful in thy Service, nor hazard my eternal

50 Monday in the first Week of Lent.

nal Happiness, by a Neglect of my Duty to thee.

“ Deliver me, O Lord, from eternal Death,
“ in that dreadful Day, when the Heavens and
“ Earth shall be moved, when thou shalt come
“ to judge the World by Fire. I tremble and
“ am sore afraid, when the Examination is to
“ be, and thy Wrath to come. When the
“ Heavens and Earth shall be moved, and
“ when thou shalt come to judge the World
“ by Fire. That Day is a Day of Anger,
“ of Calamity, and of Misery, a great Day
“ and very bitter: When thou shalt come to
“ judge the World by Fire. Woe is me, O
“ Lord, because I have sinned exceedingly in
“ my Life. O Wretch, what shall I do?
“ Whither shall I fly but to thee my God?
“ Have Mercy on me, when thou comest at
“ the latter Day. Remember not my Sins
“ when thou shalt come to judge the World
“ by Fire. Have Mercy on me, O God,
“ and save me.” *Ex Off. Defunct.*

TUESDAY



T U E S D A Y

In the first Week of *Lent*.

The GOSPEL, St. *Matt.* xxi. 10.

AND when he was come into *Jerusalem*, the whole City was moved, saying: Who is this? 11. And the People said; this is Jesus the Prophet, from *Nazareth* in *Gali ee*. 12. And Jesus went into the Temple of God, and cast out all that sold and bought in the Temple, and overthrew the Tables of the Money-Changers, and the Chairs of them that sold Doves. 13. And he saith to them: It is written, my House is to be called the House of Prayer, but you have made it a Den of Thieves. 14. And there came to him the Blind and the Lame in the Temple, and he healed them. 15. And the Chief-Priests and Scribes

Scribes seeing the wonderful Things that he did, and the Children crying in the Temple, and saying: *Hosanna* to the Son of *David*, were moved with Indignation. 16. And said to him; hearest thou what these say: And Jesus said to them, Yes; have you never read, that out of the Mouths of Infants, and of Sucklings thou hast perfected Praise? 17. And leaving them, he went out of the City into *Bethania*, and remained there.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

From the Behaviour of Jesus Christ, as related in this Gospel, it is easy to comprehend how offensive it is to God to profane his Temple, and to be wanting in Respect and Reverence in Churches, and at publick Worship. The most mild and meek Jesus, who never expressed any Resentment for the Injuries he received from the *Jews*; nor showed the least Anger or Passion for their unjust Calumnies of his sacred Person and Doctrine, entering the Temple, and seeing it horribly profaned and abused, by those who were buying and selling, and had their Banks for changing Money, was moved with Indignation and Zeal, and drove all those *Jews* out of the Temple, with a severe Reproach, that they had turned the Temple of God, the House of Prayer, into a Den of Thieves. It must then be no small Crime, to be wanting in Respect for, or to abuse the House of God, since, as we may observe, it

is only in Regard of such, that our blessed Lord here seems to lay aside that Sweetness and Mildness he always shewed to the greatest Sinners.

Would to God, the *Jews* were the only Persons guilty of turning the Houses of God into Dens of Thieves, or profaning his holy Place. Alas! there are but too many Christians who frequently hear and read what our Saviour did, and the Reproach he made to them; and yet are guilty of the same Crime. They profane the Temple of the living God, infinitely more august and venerable than that of *Solomon*. They turn the Houses of Prayer into Dens of Thieves, by robbing God of that Honour and Respect due to him, and which he justly requires of all that appear before him at his public Worship, and must expect a much severer Punishment than the *Jews*, as their Profanations are greater, and the Places more sacred. The Jewish Merchants who bought and sold in the Temple, were guilty of two Things, unworthy of the Sanctity of the Place where they were. 1. Their Minds and their Thoughts were busied about other Things than adoring God in the Temple. 2. Their outward Behaviour was very irreverent and unbecoming, the beholding which extremely offended Jesus Christ, and is still more offensive in those Christians who are guilty of the same, and which nevertheless is but too common.

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Not to observe or animadvert on those who seem studiously to contrive to come late to Prayers, as if they grudged every Minute they were obliged to remain in the House of God ; and the extreme Hurry they are in to depart the Moment the Service is over. The great Fault which the Ministers of God have Reason to complain of and reprove in his Name, is the Want of that Reverence and Devotion, which every one ought to have when he goes up to the House of Prayer. It is not with Words only, but with the Affections of the Heart, and pious Dispositions of the Mind that we are there to entertain ourselves with God, if we desire to be acceptable to him, or that he should hear our Prayers. If our Minds and Thoughts are voluntarily occupied and taken up with other Concerns, and we give little or no Attention to the sacred Mysteries we are present at, we may be said to draw near to God with our Lips, but in our Hearts are far from him, *Isaiah* xxix. An Hypocrisy which is extremely odious in his Sight, which he severely condemned in the *Jews*, and will more severely punish in Christians. Nor is he less offended when our outward Behaviour is not conformable to the Holiness of the Place, and the Majesty of him, whom we there worship. Churches and Chapels are Houses of Prayer, not Theatres to gaze and stare about in ; not Market-places or Assemblies to talk and chatter in ; not Places of Diversion to laugh and divert ourselves. They are Places
where

where we meet to implore the Mercy of God, and therefore require not only the interiour Humility of the Heart, but also the exterior Reverence of the Body, and such Postures as best become penitent Supplicants. To sit all the Time, to loll and lean, to be afraid of bending our Knees, are Postures not at all becoming the Majesty of God, or the Condition of guilty Criminals begging Pardon, or poor Beggars asking Relief in their Wants, and shew a Mind but little affected with Devotion.

To appear then in the House of God as we ought, we must behave ourselves therein with Reverence and Humility; with Attention and Devotion. There must be the Piety of the Heart, and Piety of the Body. An exterior Reverence must be joined to the Interior, and the Latter ever accompany the Former. This is the true Spirit of Devotion which the Christian must always carry with him when he goes to the House of Prayer. At those Times our Minds should be altogether intent upon, and taken up with the Business we come there for, to adore and worship God in Spirit and in Truth. To apply our Minds to other Things, when done wilfully, is not to adore and worship God, but to affront and displease him; it is to make his House a Den of Thieves, by robbing him of the Honour and Reverence due to him, and which he will severely punish in those who are guilty of it.

A S P I R A T I O N S.

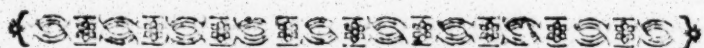
Great Lord of Heaven and Earth, before whom the Cherubims veil their Faces, and the Powers of Heaven tremble! Make me to think where I am, when I appear before thee, in thy House of Prayer. Let me never rob thee of the Honour due to thee, by any Irreverence or unbecoming Behaviour. Let me never affront thee in thy own House, that I may not provoke thy Indignation, or cause thee to stop thy Ears against my Prayers. I am infinitely obliged to thy Goodness for allowing me the Liberty to appear before thee, and to put up my Petitions at the Throne of Grace. O give me the Spirit of Devotion, that I may with Reverence and Attention address myself to thee. Then shall my Prayers ascend up as Incense before thee; and the lifting up of my Hands and Heart be an acceptable Sacrifice to thee, my God, and my Saviour.

How good and gracious art thou, O sovereign Lord of Heaven and Earth in permitting so vile a Creature, so undeserving a Wretch to appear before thee! How dare I presume to lift up my Eyes to thee, a most pure and holy God, sinful Dust and Ashes that I am? But, O Bounty and Sweetness of thee my God, thou bidest us approach to thee in thy holy Sanctuary, and promisest to hear our Prayers when we pray to thee as we ought.

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I will enter into thy Tabernacle, O Lord, and will adore thee in thy holy Place. I will prostrate myself before thy sacred Altars, and adore thee truly present. With utmost Reverence, Humility and Respect, I will strike my Breast, and say: *God, be merciful to me a Sinner.* And, O may I return from thy Temple justified in thy Sight, by the Pardon of my Sins, and the Grant of my humble Petition, begging Pardon for my Sins, and Grace to love and serve thee.





W E D N E S D A Y

In the first Week of *Lent*.

The G O S P E L, St. *Matt.* xii. 38.

THEN some of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* answered him, saying: Master, we would see a Sign from thee. 39. Who answering, said to them; a wicked and adulterous Race seeketh a Sign; and a Sign shall not be given to it, but the Sign of the Prophet *Jonas*. 40. For as *Jonas* was three Days and three Nights in the Belly of the Whale, so shall the Son of Man be three Days and three Nights in the Heart of the Earth. 41. The Men of *Nineveh* shall rise in Judgment with this Generation, and shall condemn it; because they did Penance at the Preaching of *Jonas*, and behold a greater than *Jonas* is here. 42. The Queen of the South shall rise in Judgment with this
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Generation, and shall condemn it; because she came from the Ends of the Earth to hear the Wisdom of *Solomon*, and behold a greater than *Solomon* is here. 43. And when an unclean Spirit is gone out of a Man, he walketh through dry Places, seeking Rest and finding none. 44. Then he saith; I will return into my House from whence I came out, and coming, he findeth it empty, swept and garnished. 45. Then he goeth and taketh with him seven other Spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in, and dwell there: And the last State of that Man becomes worse than the first; so shall it be also to this most wicked Generation. 46. As he was yet speaking to the Multitude, behold his Mother, and his Brethren stood without seeking to speak with him. 47. And one said unto him: Behold thy Mother and thy Brethren stand without seeking thee. 48. And he answering him that told him: Who is my Mother, and who are my Brethren? 49. And stretching forth his Hand toward his Disciples, he said: Behold my Mother and my Brethren. 50. For whosoever shall do the Will of my Father, that is in Heaven, he is my Brother and Sister, and Mother.

REFLECTIONS.

It is a severe Reproach Christ in this Gospel makes to the *Jews*, on Account of their Obstinacy and Perverseness, in refusing to hearken to

to him, and to do Penance for their Sins. He had long and often exhorted them, but met with no other Return from them, but a Contempt of his Person, *Is not this the Carpenter's Son*, Matt. xiii. And a Derision of his Doctrine; *he is mad, and hath a Devil: Why hear ye him?* John x. For which he tells them, the Men of *Nineveh* should rise up in Judgment and condemn them, having done Penance, and being converted at the Preaching of *Jonas*; while he, the Son of God, their promised Messiah, and infinitely more in Authority, and greater than *Jonas*, preached to them, and they refused to hearken and obey him. But if the Repentance of the *Ninevites* served as a Condemnation to the Jews, it will be much more so to impenitent Christians, who puts off his Repentance, and refuses to hearken to Jesus Christ speaking by the Mouth of his Ministers, and, by Consequence, is much more culpable than the Jews were, and runs a great Risk of being eternally condemned to suffer the terrible Effects of God's Indignation. *Jonas* preached to the *Ninevites*, and gave them forty Days to repent in; they immediately did Penance, God's Anger was appeased, and they escaped the Destruction they were threatened with. Happy the Sinner who imitates them! Miserable those who do not, and unhappily die before they repent! This is generally owing to a false Persuasion, that they shall have, not only Time, but also Grace, and a Will to repent. These are all necessary to a true

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Conversion, but herein the careless and negligent Sinner oftentimes finds his Hopes or rather vain Assurances disappointed. The Abuse which he has made of the Mercy and Patience of God will prove the fatal Cause, that he will not find Time; or if he has Time, will not have a Will; or if he has that, yet may not have Grace to repent. For as Grace is the free Gift of God, and which he may without Injustice refuse; such a Sinner, who has long neglected and slighted it, when offered, has no Reason to expect it when he pleases himself, nor can complain of Hardship or Injustice, if God then refuses it.

God has made many gracious Promises to Men; and to encourage Sinners to repent assures them of Pardon; but he no where promises Time, that is what he reserves to himself, and his own Disposal. Time is, of its own Nature, the most uncertain of all Things. No one can count upon, or assure himself of a Day, no not an Hour. Our Blessed Saviour exhorts us all to a speedy, as well as sincere Repentance. For this he bids us watch, because we know neither the Day nor the Hour, *Matt. xxv.* However young, strong, and healthy we may be, we know not but we may die To-morrow, this Day, or even this very Hour. Alas! I am not sure of one or two Days, and I defer and put off my Repentance for Months and Years. Good God! What Temerity! What Rashness and Folly!

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Nor

Nor is it a less Extravagance to promise ourselves a Will to repent when we please. The Will of Man, in itself, is weak and feeble; the Will of a Sinner is much more so; but that of an habitual Sinner is Weakness itself. With such a one, I would thus argue. You say you will repent and be converted, but not yet; some other Time. But what hinders you now, will hinder you then. If your Passions, inordinate Desires, and vicious Habits, are what at present hinder your Conversion, the longer you continue in them, the stronger they will grow, and you will have less Ability, as well as less Will to quit them. A Passion that is but young, and in its Infancy, is what may be easily stifled; but if it grows up, will not be governed or kept under. A Habit but lately contracted, is a Cord that may be broke without any Difficulty; but when it is of many Years Standing, it becomes like a strong Iron Chain, beyond our Strength to break. Judge then yourself, rash and inconsiderate Sinner! how you will be able to repent and be converted some Years hence, if you refuse to be converted now.

Will you say; that although it be difficult, yet you may do it by the Help of God's Grace? I own it may be done by the Assistance of Grace, which God has promised to all; that none should despair; but has nowhere promised, or engaged himself to give it to those who wilfully abuse and slight his present Offers of it. God has made many comfortable Pro-

Promises to the penitent Sinners, nor will he deceive their Hopes in him; but he has also thundered out, in his sacred Word, as many severe Threats, and terrible Menaces against those Sinners who refuse to hear him when he calls upon them to Repentance. This may make the most hardened Sinner tremble, and see his Rashness and unreasonable Folly in flattering himself with meeting Grace whenever he pleases. Christ tells the *Jews* that they should seek him but not find him; and that they should die in their Sins, *John vii. 8.* That this is not only a bare Threat, but oftentimes followed by real and terrible Effects, we may learn from the sad Example of *Cain*, *Pharaoh*, and *Antiochus*, who sought for Pardon in vain, and are Proofs of God's refusing Grace oftentimes to those Sinners who abuse it. To this may be added, that the Grace of Conversion in habitual Sinners, is a special and extraordinary Grace. A Sinner then who abuses and neglects the ordinary Graces of God, dare he hope for, and promise to himself extraordinary Graces? Alas! he has little Reason; and to depend upon them is an unsafe and unwarrantable Presumption.

These Things deserve our most serious Consideration, and the Use we are to make of them, is to close immediately with the gracious Offers of Almighty God, and now while we have Time and Opportunity, to return to him by a sincere and speedy Conversion, and to accept of his Grace which he now offers,

especially at this holy Time, for by that alone we can render ourselves secure, and escape the terrible Judgment and Condemnation, which will, otherwise, fall upon us.

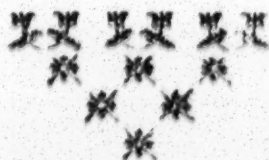
A S P I R A T I O N S.

Ah my God! make me to see, and be sensible of the Misfortune to which I expose myself, by neglecting and putting off my Conversion to thee. Deliver me, by thy great Mercy, from so great a Folly. Let me no longer abuse thy Goodness, nor trifle with my eternal Salvation. No, Lord, this Moment will I begin. And, O may it be a Change of the Right-Hand of the Most High! I humble myself before thee, in a sincere Acknowledgment of my past Sins, and I humbly beg Mercy and Pardon for them. I am grieved. I am sorry that I have so often, and so long withstood thy gracious Calls; but now I sincerely promise Amendment. From this Moment I will begin to serve thee most faithfully, and to love thee only, always, and above all other Things.

And who, O my God! so worthy to be loved as thou, the infinite, endless Source of Happiness, both in this World and the next! When I reflect on thy Bounty and thy Goodness to me, how ought I to be covered with Shame and Confusion at the Sight of my monstrous and daily Ingratitude to thee. Dearest Lord!

Wednesday in the first Week of Lent. 65

Lord! to all thy other Favours add this one more, that I may be truly sensible of thy Mercy and Patience in my Regard; and may never more abuse it. May thy Love and Bounty touch my Heart, and change me so that from this Moment I may love thee with a most pure and ardent Love, and ever hereafter remain faithful to thee. O, may I now begin truly to love and serve thee, for hitherto, alas! I have done nothing.



D 3

THURS.



T H U R S D A Y

In the first Week of *Lent*.

The G O S P E L, St. *Matt.* xv. 21.

AND *Jesus* went from thence and retired into the Coasts of *Tyre* and *Sidon*. 22. And behold a Woman of *Canaan* who came out of those Coasts, crying out, said to him: Have Mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of *David*: my Daughter is grievously troubled by a Devil. 23. Who answered her not a Word. And his Disciples came and besought him, saying: send her away: for she crieth after us. 24. And he answering, said: I was not sent but to the Sheep that are lost of the House of *Israel*. But she came and adored him, saying: Lord help me. 26. Who answering, said: It is not good to take the Children's

dren's Bread, and cast it to the Dogs. 27. But she said: Yea, Lord; for little Dogs also eat of the Crumbs which fall from their Master's Table. 28. When *Jesus* answering, said to her: O Woman, great is thy Faith: be it done to thee as thou wilt. And her Daughter was cured from that Hour.

REFLECTIONS.

In the Person of this *Canaanite* Woman, who with so much Humility and Perseverance besought our Saviour to heal her Daughter, we have excellent Instructions how, and in what Manner we ought to address ourselves to God, when we want and stand in Need of his Assistance. She is likewise a Proof of what the Apostle says; that *with God, there is no Exception of Persons*, Gal. i. She was not of the People of God, but a *Canaanite* and *Pagan*, and, as such, Christ at first rejects her, and refuses to take Notice of her Cries; and when the Apostles interceded for her, he replied: That he was only sent to the lost Sheep of the House of *Israel*, that is the *Jews*. This Refusal did not dishearten the pious Postulant, who came and adored him, and by her Humility and Perseverance gained that great Elogium: *O Woman, great is thy Faith*; and received a Grant of her Desire: *Be it done unto thee as thou desirest*. And her Daughter was immediately cured. How different is the Manner wherein this Woman prays, and that

of our Prayers and Devotions ! No Wonder the Success likewise is different ! She asks and she obtains ; we ask, and we do not receive, because, as St. James observes, *James iv.* we ask amiss. The Petition of the *Canaanite Woman* was good, for she asked the Deliverance of her Daughter from the Devil ; and she made this Petition in a right Manner, with a strong Faith, and an humble Confidence. These are two excellent Lessons given us, and whereby we may learn how to pray, so as to be heard. The first is, in all our Prayers to demand those Things which are lawful and good. The Second, to demand them in a Manner so as to move God to grant them to us.

We must first, therefore, in all our Prayers, ask those Things which are good and lawful. Such Petitions he has promised to hear ; and the holy Scriptures in many Examples shew us the Power and Efficacy of such Prayers ; and if we do not meet with the same Success in our Prayers now, the Reason is, that we do not ask such Things as we ought ; our Inclinations and Desires are bounded by the narrow Views of the Things of this World ; and they are the Object and End of our Wishes and Desires. Some ask what is seemingly to themselves good, but is not so in the Sight of God, such as Riches and Abundance, which but too often prove to us Occasions of offending him ; and if he refuses to grant such Requests, it is in Mercy to us, and to preserve

us from Danger. Perhaps it may be said by some, I ask nothing but what is lawful, as this *Canaanite* Woman did, to be freed from a violent Pain or Illness: I am poor, I demand some Assistance. These Demands are good, and reasonable in themselves, but may not be so perhaps in your particular Case. God sees that Sickness and Poverty are more convenient for you, and to answer the Designs of his Providence in your Regard, and therefore he does not grant your Request. We have an admirable Model of our Prayers in that which our blessed Saviour has given us. Let us first pray that the Name of God may be glorified, that we may partake of his heavenly Kingdom, that his Divine Will may be done; and then we may securely ask for our daily Bread. If we have a Suit at Law, if we are sick, or if we are poor; let us first ask of God that his Will be done in all Things; and then we may beg for Success in our Suit, for the Recovery of our Health, and for a Relief of our Necessities. This is what Christ exhorts us to, saying: *Seek first the Kingdom of God, and his Righteousness, and all other Things shall be added to you*, Matt. vi. This is the first Lesson, in Regard of Prayer, that the Example of this *Canaanite* Woman affords us.

A Second is, to pray as we ought, and to make our Petitions in such a Manner as may move God to grant them. This we may learn from the Example of this Gay's Gospel. The poor Woman desired our blessed Lord to deli-

ver her Daughter from the Power of the Devil; this Prayer she made with great Humility, a strong Confidence and Perseverance, three essential Qualifications of a Christian Prayer. Humility is absolutely necessary to have our Prayers regarded by God, who always resisteth the Proud, but giveth Grace to the Humble, *James iv.* And it is only the Prayer of the Humble that penetrates the Clouds, *Eccles. xxxv.* If with the *Canaanite* Woman we humbly acknowledge our Unworthiness; and with the penitent Publican smite our Breasts, and say, *Lord be merciful to me a Sinner*, *Luke xviii.* then will God hear our Prayers, and grant our Requests.

Another Condition of Prayer, is to pray with Confidence and Faith. We must believe God willing to hear our Petitions, and able to grant our Requests; if we express any Diffidence in his Goodness and Power, we put an Affront upon him, and hinder him from hearing us, and yet this is what we too often behold. We have so little Faith and Confidence in God, that he is oftentimes the last to whom we have Recourse in any Necessity; and then, when all other Helps fail; whereas we should go to him in the first Place, for he can help us alone, but no other Person without him. Had the Woman in the Gospel showed any Diffidence in our Blessed Saviour, he had neither commended her Faith, nor granted her Request: To be heard, like her, we must pray without Doubting, and let no unworthy Diffidence,

dence, hinder the divine Bounty from granting our Requests.

The third Condition to pray as we ought, is Perseverance. If we do not immediately perceive the Effect of our Prayers, in the Grant of what we ask, we must not for that give over praying. What God seems to deny at first, he will give at the latter End, if we continue to pray. Hence our blessed Saviour tells us, *it becoms us a'ways to pray, and not to faint*, Luke xviii. Thus the poor Woman in the Gospel was at first rejected by our Saviour, and even when the Apostles interceded for her, yet, not discouraged but continuing her Cries, obtained her Desires, and was sent away with: *Be it done unto thee, as thou desirest*. In like Manner we shall obtain our Requests, if we are constant in our Prayers, and do not leave them off. As we must make all our Petitions with Submission to God's Holy Will, we must also leave the Time when, as well as the Manner how to him; and expect with Patience when he shall please to grant what we desire. If we solicit a Courtier, or Person in Power for his Assistance, we do not take the first Refusal; we solicit again, and if we obtain a Promise, are content to wait his Time and Leisure, and after all may, and often are disappointed: And shall we not be content to wait God's Time, who we know will never disappoint or deceive us? If he delays for some Time to grant our Petition, it is only to try our Faith and our Patience, and the
more

more amply to reward those Virtues. We shall have no Reason to repent our Expectation; for if we continue to seek, we shall find; if we continue to ask, it will be given to us; and if we continue to knock, Heaven's Gates will be opened to us. Let us conclude these Reflections with the Words of St. Bernard: "If our Prayers are made with Faith, Humility and Fervency, they will certainly ascend up to Heaven, nor can they return from thence empty, or in vain." (*Serm. 4. in Quadrang.*)

A S P I R A T I O N S.

Adorable Saviour! who dost graciously bid us ask every Thing in thy Name, with a Promise that we shall be heard, teach me to ask for what I ought, and as I ought. Make me to understand those Things which I ask of thy heavenly Father: Instruct me how I am to ask them. Give me that Faith, that Humility and that Perseverance which may make my Prayers acceptable to thee; that praying, as I ought, here upon Earth, I may praise thee for Eternity in Heaven. Great is thy Goodness, O merciful Redeemer of Mankind! who in Condescension to our Weakness, hast given us a most excellent and perfect Form of Prayer: And for our Encouragement, hast assured us, that when we pray, we shall be heard. Hear then my Prayers, O Lord, and grant that I may be sensible of thy Goodness to me, and my

my Obligations to thee. Make me sensible of my own Weakness, and the continual Dependence I have upon thee. To thee may I have Recourse in all my Necessities, and from thy Bounty obtain a Supply of all my Wants, to the Honour and Glory of thy holy Name.

I see, O my dearest Lord, the great Necessity I have of thy Grace, without which I can do nothing. I humbly beg this thy divine Assistance to help my Weakness, and to confirm and strengthen me in my good Purposes and Resolutions of loving and serving thee. Behold, dear Saviour of my Soul, full of Misery, Weakness and Corruption, I have Recourse to thee; for thou only canst help and assist me. To thee do I humbly lay open all my Miseries, not to inform thee, O thou to whom the Secrets of all Hearts are open, and from whom nothing is hid, but to move thy Compassion and to obtain from thy Love and Bounty a Relief of my Wants. O inexhaustible Treasure of Goodness and Love, open the rich Storehouse of thy Mercy and communicate thy Graces to me. Fill my Heart with an ardent Love of thee. Unite me intimately to thee, that nothing may divide or separate me from thee; that I may for ever live in thee, and thou in me.



F R I D A Y

In the first Week of *Lent*.

The G O S P E L, St. *John* v. 1.

AFTER these Things there was a Festival Day of the *Jews*, and Jesus went up to *Jerusalem*. 2. Now there is at *Jerusalem* a Pond called *Probatia*, which in *Hebrew* is named *Bethsaida*, having five Porches. 3. In these lay a great Multitude of sick, of blind, of lame, of withered, waiting for the moving of the Water. 4. For an Angel of the Lord descended at certain Times into the Pond, and the Water was moved, and he that went down first into the Pond after the Motion of the Water, was made whole of whatsoever Infirmary he lay under. 5. Now a certain Man was there, that had been for eight and thirty Years under his Infirmary. 6. Him when Jesus had seen

seen lying; and knew that he had been now a long Time, he saith to him: Wilt thou be made whole? 7. The infirm Man answered him: Sir, I have no Man, when the Water is troubled, to put me into the Pond; for while I am coming another goeth down before me. 8. Jesus saith to him: Arise, take up thy Bed and walk. 9. And immediately the Man was made whole; and he took up his Bed and walked: And it was the Sabbath that Day. 10. The *Jews* therefore said to him that was healed; it is the Sabbath, it is not lawful for thee to take up thy Bed. 11. He answered them: He that made me whole he said to me; take up thy Bed and walk. 12. They asked him therefore, who is that Man who said to thee, take up thy Bed and walk? 13. But he who was healed, knew not who it was: for Jesus went aside from the Multitude standing in the Place. 14. Afterwards Jesus findeth him in the Temple, and said to him: Behold thou art made whole: Sin no more, lest something worse befall thee: 15. This Man went his Way, and told the *Jews* that it was Jesus, who had made him whole. 16. The *Jews* therefore persecuted Jesus because he did these Things on the Sabbath.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

The Gospel of this Day affords us three excellent and useful Considerations. 1. The sad State of Sinners, represented by the poor Man who had laboured eight and thirty Years under a Distemper. 2. The great Mercy of God to all Sinners, exemplified in our blessed Saviour's curing this poor sick Man. 3. A necessary and profitable Caution for Sinners pardoned, and reconciled to God, in those Words of Christ to the sick Man : *Behold thou art cured : Sin no more, lest something worse befall thee.* The Condition of this poor Man was, doubtless, very deplorable. He had laboured eight and thirty Years under a Distemper, unable to help himself, and not having any one to assist him, or put him first into the Water, to be cured at the Pond of *Bethsaida*. Admirable Figure of the deplorable Condition of Sinners ! especially those who live in an habitual State of Sin, which depriving them of the Grace of God, renders them unable to help or assist themselves. Sad Effects of Sin, which reduces a Sinner to such a spiritual Weakness, that the Will becomes averse to Good, and backward to every Thing that relates to God, and his Service ; the Understanding, blind and ignorant, neither seeing nor understanding the sad State he is in ! While they remain in this sad State, they are, like the Man in the Gospel, unable to help themselves, and in vain, wait
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for the Assistance of others, alas ! None of what they seem to trust in, can be of any Service to them. The Things of this World, to which they are so violently attached, will be no Comfort to them ; nor when they have a Mind to be cured, can help towards it : It is only the Mercy and Grace of God can do that, and which he is always willing to bestow upon those who sincerely desire it : And though the State of an habitual Sinner be truly bad, he must not despair. God has Mercy for the greatest Sinners, and to all such he says, as Christ did to the sick Man : *Will you be made whole ?* And if they are sincerely willing, he will further say to them : *Rise, take up thy Bed and walk.*

The Consideration of this great Mercy of God to Sinners, is, and ought to be, Matter of great Comfort and Consolation to such, who may always, and at all Times find him, a powerful Physician, both able and willing to cure them : And for the Encouragement of all Sinners, even the greatest, he thus, by the Prophet addresses himself to them : *As I live saith the Lord God, I desire not the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he be converted and live,* Ezek. xxxiii. *Turn to me, O House of Israel, and though your Sins be as Scarlet they shall become white as Snow ; and though they are red as Vermilion, they shall be made white as Wool,* Isaias i. No Assurance can be stronger than this, that God will show Mercy to all penitent Sinners, and no Time can be more proper for
such

such, than the present penitential Season, wherein we are called upon by the Church, to seek a Reconciliation with God, by Fasting and Praying, and by turning from our evil Ways. To this God exhorts us by his Prophets: *Convert yourselves from your evil Ways: And why will ye die, O House of Israel, Ezek. xxxiii.* Can any Thing be more tender and endearing? Must not that Sinner be obstinately bent to his own Destruction who refuses to answer so gracious a Call? Not so the sick Man in the Gospel. Our Saviour asked him, if he desired to be made whole. He showed himself willing, but said he had no one to help him. Christ immediately cured him, and bid him take up his Bed and walk. Would Sinners imitate this Paralytick, be sensible of their sad State, show a sincere Willingness to be freed from it, and do as their spiritual Physician orders them, they would find a certain Cure, and be restored to their Health again, in recovering the Grace and Favour of God, which having done, they must be mindful of the Advice our blessed Lord gave to this Man, when he found him afterwards in the Temple: *Sin no more, lest a worse Thing befall thee.*

Nothing can be more unworthy and ungrateful than for a Person, who having forfeited Life and Estate for Treason to his Prince, and having the one spared, and the other restored to him by Royal Bounty, falls again into Treason and Rebellion. Such a one deserves to feel the outmost Rigour of the Law. This
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every one agrees in, and from our own Determination in such a Case, we may learn how heinous an Offence it is, and how severe a Punishment it deserves, wilfully to relapse into those Sins which have been pardoned by God. As nothing is more unworthy his Goodness, so nothing more provokes his Justice. A wilful Relapse is a Violation of the holy Sacrament of Penance, wherein the Sinner solemnly engages himself never more to offend God, to whom having forfeited eternal Life, by Sin, and to which being again restored, by the Mercy of God; what can be a greater Crime than again to rise up in spiritual Rebellion against him: Such Sinners deserve the severest Punishment, and to smart under his Justice, who thus ungratefully abuse his Mercy. For, as *St. Chrysostome* observes, “He is unworthy of Mercy, “who after Pardon sins again; he is unworthy of Health, who being cured, makes “himself sick again; and neither does he deserve to be cleansed, who after Grace defiles himself again.” *Hom. 2. de Lapsu Privi Hom.* There is nothing, then, we ought to be more careful of than relapsing into Sin after we have been pardoned. Nothing ought to be more our Care, than to preserve ourselves in the Grace and Favour of God, to which we are restored by Repentance, and to remember what our Saviour says: *Sin no more, lest something worse befall thee.*

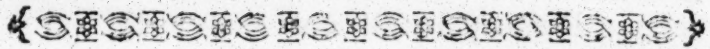
A S P I R A T I O N S.

O Jesus, the true and only Physician of my Soul! to thee I have Recourse. I am sick, dear Lord, and have long been troubled with many Infirmities: I labour under many evil Habits, and have no one to help me. Look upon me with an Eye of Pity, and say to me, as thou didst to the sick Man: *Rise, take up thy Bed and walk.* O breathe those comfortable Words to my Soul: *Be of good Courage, thy Sins are forgiven thee.* Then will I rise and walk in the Paths of thy holy Commandments, and with all possible Gratitude and Acknowledgment, praise thy holy Name. But when thou hast thus restored me to Health, and made me whole, graciously preserve and keep me so. Let me never relapse again into Sin, nor frustrate thy Goodness, by my Folly and Ingratitude. Alas! dear Lord, how ought I to be covered with Shame and Confusion, when I consider how often thou hast mercifully pardoned my Sins, and I have foolishly relapsed into those Sins again? O God, my Soul is troubled and I am filled with Fear and Apprehension; but thou art an inexhaustible Fund of Mercy and Goodness; and as such, I have Recourse to thee again. Pardon me, O merciful Saviour, once more; and I hope by thy Grace hereafter to be more constant and faithful to thee.

It is what I earnestly desire, and what I seriously labour for. Thou hast given me this
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Desire. I could not have it but from thee. Perfect then, dear Lord, what thou hast begun in me. O thou Health of my Soul! thou sovereign Remedy of all my Evils! To whom should I have Recourse but to thee, or from whom should I seek for Help but from thee? Thou alone can restore the Sick to Health, and raise the Dead to Life. O may I experience this thy Power and thy Goodness. Heal me, O Lord, and my Soul shall be healed, and may thy same Bounty preserve me in that Health thou hast restored me to, that I may praise and glorify thy Name for ever and ever.





S A T U R D A Y

In the first Week of *Lent*.

The G O S P E L, St. *Matt.* xvii. 1.

AND six Days after Jesus taketh unto him *Peter*, and *James*, and *John* his Brother, and bringeth them up to a high Mountain apart. 2. And he was transfigured before them; and his Face did shine as the Sun, and his Garments became white as Snow. 3. And behold there appeared to them *Moses*, and *Elias* talking with him. 4. And *Peter* answering, said to Jesus: Lord it is good for us to be here: If thou wilt let us make here three Tabernacles, one for thee, one for *Moses*, and one for *Elias*. 5. And while he was yet speaking, behold a bright Cloud overshadowed them; and lo, a Voice out of the Cloud, saying: this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. 6.
And

And the Disciples hearing it, fell upon their Faces, and were very much afraid. 7. And Jesus came and touched them, and said to them: Arise and fear not. 8. And they lifting up their Eyes, saw no one but only Jesus. 9. And as they came down from the Mountain, Jesus charged them, saying: tell the Vision to no Man, till the Son of Man be risen from the Dead.

REFLECTIONS.

Our blessed Lord having entertained his Disciples with a Discourse concerning his Passion, and the cruel Sufferings he was to meet with from the Jews, St. Peter in a Transport of Love to his Divine Master, said to him: *Lord far be it from thee: this shall not happen to thee*, Matt. xvi. But the Son of God, far from approving this Answer, gave to the Prince of the Apostles a severe Reprimand, and from thence took Occasion to tell his Apostles, that he was not to suffer alone, but they, and every one who desired to be his Disciples, must, after his Example, suffer and carry their Cross; and that in Recompence of such Suffering, they should partake of his Glory, when he came to judge the World, and to render to every one according to his Works. But as the Glory which he promised was a Thing future, and unknown to them, he would give them a Glimpse of it, by Way of Encouragement, that they might not doubt of the Truth of what
he

he had said to them ; hence he took with him St. *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, up to a high Mountain, and was there transfigured before them. In the Myſtery of Chriſt's Transfiguration we may conſider what St. *Luke* ſays, *Chap. ix.* that *Mofes* and *Elias* talked with our Saviour about his Paſſion, and what he was to ſuffer at *Jeruſalem*. By which we are to underſtand that it is by ſuffering with Chriſt, that we muſt hope to arrive at his Glory. As the Apoſtle St. *Paul* ſays : *If we ſuffer with him, we ſhall be glorified with him*, Rom. viii. The Sufferings of Mount *Calvary* are the Way to the Glories of Mount *Thabor* ; and the Glories of Mount *Thabor* will recompenſe the Sufferings of Mount *Calvary*.

Chriſt ſays of himſelf, that it behoved him to ſuffer, and ſo to enter Glory, *Luke xxiv.* And if it behoved him, who is our Head, much more us, who are his Members. We all expect and deſire to ſhare in the Glory of Heaven, but it is an Illuſion to think we ſhall arrive there, and not walk in the Way that leads to it. The Croſs is the only Way which leads to Heaven. Shall we flatter ourſelves then with Hopes of getting thither, if we turn out of the Way to it ? We may hope for Heaven as Sons of God, and the Brethren of Jeſus Chriſt ; but then we muſt be content to ſuffer with him. We may hope for Heaven as Members of the Catholick Church ; but the Croſs and Sufferings are her Portion here, and we
muſt

must have our Share in them. If we hope to gain Heaven as Penitents, we must suffer, to make some Atonement for our Sins. If we desire to share in the Glories of *Thabor*, we must first bear a Part in the Sufferings of *Calvary*. And the Glories of the Former, duly considered, will animate and enable us to bear, with Joy and Patience, the Sufferings of the Latter.

There is no Suffering in this World, however it may appear to Flesh and Blood, that to a Christian, can seem hard and difficult, when he considers the Glory of Heaven, which will be the Recompence of it. This made St. Paul say, *that the Sufferings of this World are not worthy to be compared with the future Glory which shall be revealed in us*, Rom. viii. What Proportion is there between the short Sufferings of a few Days or Years, and the eternal, never-ending Glories of Heaven? Let us take into our Hands the Balance of Eternity, and put on one Side all the Miseries of this Life, Pain, Grief, Shame, Poverty, Disgrace and Persecution; on the other Side, let us put Eternity, Heaven, God himself; what Disproportion! Holy *Joh*, in all his Afflictions, made Use of this Consideration, and from his Dungeon, and in the Midst of his Pains, cried out with Joy: *I shall see my God; my Eyes shall behold him; this Hope is laid up in my Bosom*, Job. xv. Thus a good Christian, who sees, by the Eye of Faith, all the Glories of

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Heaven

Heaven will say: I have lost my temporal Goods; but I shall see God, and one Day possess him. I am calumniated, persecuted, and in Disgrace; my Body is sorely afflicted by Sickness, and in Pain; but this same Body shall rise again, to partake of the Glory of Heaven and enjoy God. This Consideration will be to us Ease in all our Troubles, and an excellent *Catholicon* for all Distempers. When once we come to have our Hearts warmed with a Desire of the other World, and place before our Eyes the incomparable Glories and Happiness of it, we shall not think much of those Sufferings which are necessary Means to obtain it. We shall rather say with St. Peter, *it is good for us to be here*, and think ourselves happy in being in the sure and high Road to our heavenly Country, where all our Tears will be wiped away; our Sorrow turned into Joy, and the short and momentary Troubles of this World, be terminated in an eternal Possession of never ending Bliss.

A S P I R A T I O N S.

O my adorable Jesus! Suffering Redeemer of Mankind! I do earnestly desire to partake with thee in thy Glories: And, I am also content to share with thee in thy Sufferings. I will carry my Cross after thee. I will be crucified

cified to this World, and it shall be crucified to me. I desire, dear Jesus, to ascend up with thee to Mount *Thabor*; but will first follow thee to Mount *Calvary*. There will I die to myself, and all the World; there will I offer myself a Sacrifice to thee on the Altar of thy holy Cross. Love, dear Lord, nailed thee to that sacred Wood; and Love shall fix me on it likewise. O that I could there breathe out my Soul in Affections of Love and Gratitude to thee, who hast so loved me, as to die upon this Cross, for my Sake, and for Love of me! Teach me to know and understand this important Truth, that to be happy with thee, I must suffer with thee, and that by the Way of the Cross, I must, and can only arrive at the Crown.

Shall I then murmur and repine at any Cross or Affliction thou shalt please to send me? No, my God, my dearest Jesus, I will willingly take up my Cross and follow thee. The Cross is thy Royal Standard, around which thou dost gather all thy faithful Servants; and how can I pretend to belong to thee if I fly from thy Cross? The Cross, then, henceforth shall be my Delight. I will be content, I will rejoice to suffer for thee, and with thee here, that I may be happy with thee hereafter. I will sanctify all my Pains by thy holy Cross, and may all Afflictions be rendered sweet and easy to me by thinking on what thou hast suffered for me. My divine and suffering

88 *Saturday in the first Week of Lent.*

Lord and Master, I am thy Disciple and thy
Servant. I will not desire to be treated better
than thou wast. It shall be my Glory, and
I will account it my Happiness, to suffer with
thee.



SECOND



SECOND SUNDAY in LENT.

The GOSPEL, St. *Matt.* xvii. 1.

AND six Days after Jesus taketh unto him *Peter*, and *James* and *John*, his Brother, and bringeth them up to a high Mountain apart : 2. And he was transfigured before them ; and his Face did shine as the Sun ; and his Garments became white as the Snow. 3. And behold there appeared to them *Moses* and *Elias*, talking with him. 4. And *Peter* answering, said to Jesus : Lord, it is good for us to be here : If thou wilt, let us make here three Tabernacles, one for thee, one for *Moses*, and one for *Elias*. 5. While he was yet speaking, lo, a bright cloud overshadowed them ; and behold a Voice out of the Cloud saying : This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased : hear ye him. 6. And the Disciples hearing it,

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fell on their Faces, and were very much afraid. 7. And Jesus came and touched them, and said to them: Arise and fear not. 8. And they lifting up their Eyes, saw no one but only Jesus. 9. And as they came down from the Mount, Jesus charged them, saying: tell the Vision to no Man, till the Son of Man be risen from the Dead.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

The Design of the holy Jesus, in carrying *St. Peter, James and John* up to a high Mountain, there to behold the Glory of his Transfiguration was, without Doubt, to encourage them the better to undergo all those arduous Labours they were designed for; and to bear with Patience those Sufferings their Divine Master had told them they should undergo; in Hopes of obtaining thereby the Glory of Heaven, of which, what they beheld upon Mount *Thabor*, was a Representation, The same we may say is the Design of the Church in Reading this Portion of the Holy Scripture, for her Gospels, Yesterday and To-day; that being led thereby to a Consideration of the infinite Happiness and Glory of the other World, we may with greater Ease and Courage pursue our Journey thereto, through the arduous and difficult Ways of Mortification, Self-denial, Fasting, Prayer, and Works of Penance, which

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is that High Way of the Cross, as will undoubtedly bring us to that glorious and happy Place; the consideration of which will make us cry out with St. Peter, *It is good for us to be here.* No Wonder the Apostle in Raptures of Joy and Admiration, desired to remain on Mount *Thabor*, and was loth to quit the Glories he there beheld. But it is highly to be wondered at, that among Christians, those who profess themselves Disciples of Jesus Christ, there should be found so many who use the same Expression, but in a far different Manner, and with Regard to different Objects. And though this World has nothing in it truly desirable; nothing that is permanent and lasting; nothing that can render us happy; yet many there are so blinded with Affections to the Enjoyment of it, and are so strongly attached to the Pleasures, Riches and Honours of it, that, forgetful of their heavenly Country, they cry out: *Bonum est nos hic esse.* *It is good for us to be here.* This is indeed Matter of Surprise and Wonder, and shews the fatal Degeneracy of such Minds, unworthy of the Character they bear, and who by these inordinate Affections, and the Love they have to this World, and the Follies of it, run an extreme Hazard of losing the Happiness and Glories of the other.

To correct which, we are called upon this Day to a serious Consideration of Heaven, and the Happiness thereof, that we may make a wise and just Choice: Nor foolishly for the

Sake of a little transient and seeming Satisfaction here, neglect the solid and everlasting Comforts to be had hereafter. Let us enter into the Sentiments of our holy Mother the Church, and ponder seriously what the World is. Upon Examination we shall soon discover that it is an errant Cheat, which only deceives those who trust to, and rely upon it. This will evidently appear, if we consider that to render a Man truly happy, three Things are necessary. 1. Something that is capable of satisfying all his Desires; for to enjoy one Thing which we desire, and to want another which we ardently wish for, is but a partial Happiness, or rather a Misery; for the Pain which the Want of one gives us, takes away all the Pleasure of enjoying the other. 2. We must not only find out, and discover what will satisfy all our Desires; but we must also possess it. 3. This Possession must not be for a little Time only, but always without Fear of losing it. But this is no where to be found in the World. It has nothing capable of fully satisfying the Desires of a Heart created for God, and which can never be contented but in him. Nor can we be said truly to possess any Thing in the World; and the Enjoyment we have of it is only for a few Days.

For the Truth of the first Assertion we may venture to appeal to Worldlings themselves, even those who enjoy the largest Share of Honours, Riches and Pleasures, that they are not fully satisfied: Something is wanting: They would

would still rise higher ; they desire more Riches, and some new Pleasure is wanting. This evidently shows, that it is but a false Happiness they enjoy, a Shadow instead of a Substance. If any one may be stiled happy in the Possession of the Things of this World, it is he whose Desires are bounded, and is content with a little, a Competency suitable to his Station ; and yet the Trouble to procure and maintain this little, this Competency, is often so great, as to render such a one far from being perfectly happy.

Secondly, no one can be said truly to possess any Thing in this World. Our Spirits and Thoughts may be occupied about the Things of it. Our Hearts and Inclinations may bend towards them ; but alas, that is not to possess them. We may have them in our Power, and yet not enjoy them. A covetous Man does not possess his Riches, but his Riches rather possess him : the same may be said of Pleasure, or any other Enjoyment of the World. And though we should enjoy them, yet as we can only enjoy them a little Time, a few Years, it is but an imaginary Possession ; a Dream, a Vapour, an Illusion. We are not sure we may enjoy them long, but are sure that sooner or later we must leave them. Can we then, without extreme Folly, turn all our Thoughts and Desires towards this World, and the Things of it, which we can neither possess nor enjoy long ; since they pass and repass, and are subject to change every Moment ?

This is the State of the World, and this that false Happiness which it affords. Can this be worth a Christian's Care or serious Thought? Can we have any Reason to say: *Bonum est nos hic esse. It is good for us to be here.* No certainly. It is only in Heaven, in the Possession and the Enjoyment of God himself, that we can be truly happy. It is good indeed, for us to be there, where all our Desires will be abundantly satisfied. There we shall desire nothing which we shall not have; nor seek any Thing which we shall not find. There will be Joy without any Mixture of Sorrow. Plenty without any Fear of Want: Health without Apprehension of Sickness. No burning Heat; no piercing Cold; no Poverty, no Disgrace, no Want of Friends; no Crosses or Disappointments, but a continual Flow of lasting Pleasures and Delights. There we shall see God Face to Face, 1 Cor. xiii. There we shall behold him, as he is, 1 John iii. And in possessing him, enjoy all Things else. In a Word, we shall there enjoy what Eye hath not seen, the Ear hath not heard, nor the Heart of Man can comprehend. We shall enjoy, not for a little Time, but for ever. We shall truly possess them, for we can never lose the Possession of them. Our Enjoyment shall last for all Eternity, as long as God is God. After a thousand Millions of Ages, they will be still new, still fresh, and no nearer their End, for there is no End to an endless Eternity. This is Happiness indeed; and this
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Happiness is offered to every one, every one may obtain it. If for obtaining this Happiness we suffer some Troubles and Afflictions here, will not they be more than abundantly recompenced hereafter? Yes, certainly; and it will be the Height of practical Folly, to run the Hazard of losing Heaven for any Thing that can be obtained on Earth. Those who are such Fools, deserve to smart under the Loss, and experience the sad Effects of so mad a Choice. O let us rather remember, for what we are created; for what we are redeemed by the adorable Blood of Jesus Christ, *Call to Mind, O Christian, your Dignity*, cries out Tertullian, *remember you are a Candidate for Eternity*. Think then only of God, desire nothing but him; let all your Actions be done for him: Seek him only upon Earth, if you desire to reign eternally with him in Heaven.

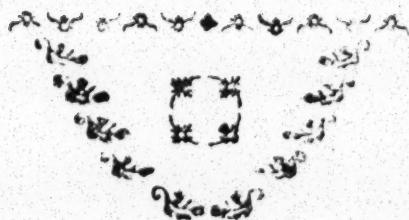
ASPIRATIONS.

How amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts! My Soul faints with Desire after the House of God, Psalm lxxxiii. O Heaven, Heaven! to thee do I lift up my Eyes, and with a longing Heart, and stretched-out Arms reach at thy Glories, O my infinitely good God, who hast promised this Heaven, and all
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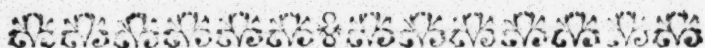
its Glories, to those who love and serve thee. I admire thy excessive Bounty, thus to reward our little Services. Shall I not love thee? Shall I not serve thee? Shall I not obey thee? Ah my God I will love, honour and obey thee; for thou art the best of Masters, and thy Rewards, like thyself, are infinite and incomprehensible. Thou hast made me for Heaven and eternal Happiness. Shall I not esteem it? Shall I neglect all the Glories of this happy Place, to busy myself about the Trifles of this World, and foolishly seek for Happiness where it is not to be found? No; no; I will contemn and despise the World, and all its short lived Pleasures. All my Care and Labour shall be for Heaven. There will I fix all my Thoughts: there will I terminate all my Endeavours. Adieu, vain World! I bid you for ever farewell; all I wish or desire is to enjoy my God, and to be happy for ever with him.

*As the Hart panteth after the Water Brook,
so panteth my Soul after thee, O Lord, Psalm
xli. O when shall I come and appear before the
Presence of my God, Psalm liv. Who will
give me Wings, that I may fly away from the
Troubles of this World, and be at rest, dear
Lord, with thee? When shall my happy
Soul possess thee, sweet Jesus, the only Ob-
ject of my Wishes and Desires? When shall I
arrive at that charming Place where I shall for
ever enjoy thee without the least Fear of losing
thee?*

thee? Ah my God, and my All! in thine own good Time take my Soul out of Prison, the sad Prison of this miserable Life, where I am separated from thee; where, alas! I so often offend thee, and then shall I praise and glorify thy holy Name. For, whom have I in Heaven but thee; and what is there upon Earth that I desire but thee? *Psal. 72.*



MONDAY



M O N D A Y

In the second Week of *Lent*.

The G O S P E L, St. *John* viii. 21.

JESUS again therefore said to them : I go
and you shall seek me, and you shall die
in your Sin ; whither I go, you cannot come.
22. The *Jews* therefore said ; will he kill
himself ? because he said : whither I go, you
cannot come. 23. And he said to them ; you
are from beneath, I am from above : You are
of this World, I am not of this World. 24.
Therefore, I said to you ; that you shall die in
your Sins ; for if you believe not that I am
he, you shall die in your Sins. 25. They said
therefore to him, who art thou ? Jesus said
to them : The Beginning, who also speak un-
to you. 26. Many Things have I to speak,
and to judge of you ; but he that sent me is
true :

true: And the Things I have heard from him, these speak I in the World. 27. And they understood not, that he called God his Father. 28. Jesus therefore said to them: When you shall have lifted up the Son of Man, then you shall know that I am he; and that I do nothing of myself, but as the Father hath taught me these Things I speak. 29. And he that sent me, is with me, and he hath not left me alone; for I do always the Things that please him.

REFLECTIONS.

It is a most terrible Threat which the Saviour of the World here utters against the *Jews*. Nor is it less terrible in Regard of many Christians, whom it equally concerns. Not to seek after God, is a terrible Thing; but to seek after him, and not to find him, is infinitely more so. This is what Christ threatens the *Jews* with, and not only them, but many Christians likewise. *You shall seek me, and you shall die in your Sins.* A plain Indication of the terrible Condition of a dying Sinner, who then seeks God, but does not find him. Let us consider the sad Condition of such an unhappy Person, and examine into the Cause, why he does not find God, whom he then seeks. It will be a useful Enquiry, and may put us upon using proper means to prevent
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our being involved in the same terrible Calamity.

An unfortunate Sinner who has all his Lifetime resisted the Calls and Inspirations of God; been deaf to the frequent Exhortations which have been given to him, and refused to repent; when his last Sickness tells him he has not long to live, that he is near his End, what Horror and Confusion does this fling him into! Alas! he then look upon his past Life, spent in Sin and Folly; and the many and enormous Crimes he has been guilty of, fling him almost into Despair: The severe and strict Judgment he is about to undergo, makes him sweat with Dread and Apprehension: Having so long abused the Divine Mercy, he finds little Reason to hope in it: Then he is sensible of all the Disorders of his past Life: He makes just Reflections on Things, but these Reflections come too late. How many Things does he repent of, but with a fruitless Repentance. What Grief and Vexation is he then in with himself, for not doing what he might have done. How does he regret and condemn his Folly when it is too late! In this Extremity, all that ever he heard of Death, Judgment, Heaven and Hell, come into his Mind to afflict him, and in this sad State a Priest is sent for to comfort him, but what Comfort can the Sight of a Priest be to one who all his Lifetime slighted the sacred Order, contemned their pious Admonitions, and made a Jest of the serious Truths of Religion? Can the Sight of
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a Crucifix, or the Passion of Christ, afford any Consolation to one who never lived like a Disciple of the crucified Jesus? It were well if the dying Sinner could make a right Use of the Moments he has left. But, alas! the Fright and Confusion he is in, the Regret he has to quit this World, and the Enjoyments of it, hinder him from making proper Use even of that little Time. In this Case the Sinner dies, in a Manner, the most unhappy, truly unhappy, because, by Death he enters upon a miserable Eternity. And though he seeks God, yet he does not find him, and thus miserably dies in his Sins.

This is a terrible Calamity, but entirely owing to the Sinner himself, and because he would not seek God, when he might have found him; nor would hearken to him, when he was called upon to repent and amend. God had often, and long called upon him by the Ministers of his Word: Had often solicited him by the secret Inspirations of his Grace, and afforded him Time and Opportunity, but he would neither embrace one, nor hearken to the other. He wilfully persisted in the Ways of Sin, and would not abridge or deny himself unlawful Pleasures; he gave himself up to the World and its sinful Modes and Customs: He had no Regard to the self-denying Principles of the Gospel; and thus, under the Name of a Christian, living like a Heathen, he finds no Comfort when he comes to die; and though he then seemingly seeks after
G o d

God, does not find him. Nor are we to wonder at it. God himself has declared, that he will not be mocked: That those who refuse to hear when he calls upon them, he will not hear them, when they cry unto him; and that when they knock and say; *Lord, Lord, open to us:* He will answer; *I know you not; depart from me you Workers of Iniquity,* Matt. xxiv. as he told the *Jews*, they should die in their Sins. Sad Conclusion of a worldly and sinful Life! How melancholy must it be to go out of the World in this Manner! The only Way to avoid it is now, while we are alive and in Health; now, while we have Time and Opportunity afforded us, to serve God and keep his Commandments; to make his holy Gospel the Rule of our Conduct. This will give us Comfort upon our Death-bed, and help us to go out of this World with Joy and Satisfaction. Then God will be found by us when we call upon him, he will answer, and say: *Well done, good and faithful Servant, enter into the Joy of the Lord,* Matt. xx.

A S P I R A T I O N S.

O my God! is there any Thing in this World for the Purchase of which I can be content to suffer all this Horror and Confusion at my last Hour? No certainly. Shall I be so foolish as not to seek thee now, when I may find thee? Shall I put off my Search till my last Moments, and so run the Hazard of not finding thee, and of dying in my Sins? Dear Lord, let me not be guilty of this Madness, this Folly, nor fall into this sad Calamity. Let me not die the Death of a Sinner; but when the Time comes that I must die, receive me into thy Protection at my last Hour. O God, imprint this serious Truth deep into my Breast, that to die well and happily I must love and serve thee. *O may my Soul die the Death of the Righteous, and may my last End be like this,* Numb. xxiii.

My God! this is the sincere Wish and Desire of my Soul. Whenever thou shalt please to take me from hence, take me to thyself, and I shall be happy and safe; but first, may thy Grace fit me for this. May it be my daily Care and Endeavours to prepare myself to meet thee at my last Hour, that I may breathe out my Soul in Peace, and quietly resign it up to thee. For this I trust in thy Goodness and Mercy, and will prepare myself while thou affordest me Time and Opportunity. I will endeavour to live the Life of the Just, and then I may truly
hope

104 Monday *in the second Week of Lent.*

hope that my last End shall be like his. Comfortable Thought, which takes away all Fear of Death, blunts its Sting, and removes all its Terrors. What can we have to fear, my Soul, at the End of a well-spent Life? And what may I not hope for from thy Goodness, O my God? All that thou thyself canst give, with whom I shall then be eternally happy.



TUESDAY



T U E S D A Y

In the second Week of *Lent*.

The GOSPEL, *St. Matt. xxiii. 1.*

THEN Jesus spoke to the Multitude, and to his Disciples, saying : 2. The *Scribes* and *Pharisees* sit in the Chair of *Moses*. 3. Observe therefore, and do all whatsoever they shall say unto you : But do ye not according to their Works ; for they say, and do not. 4. For they bind heavy and unsupportable Burdens, and lay them upon Mens Shoulders : But with a Finger of their own they will not move them. 5. And all their Works they do to be seen of Men : For they make their *Phylacteries* abroad, and enlarge their Fringes. 6. And they love the first Places at Feasts, and the first Seats in the Synagogues. 7. And Salutations in the Market-place, and to be called by Men Rabbi. 8. But be not you called Rabbi : For
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one is your Master, and all you are Brethren.
 9. And call none your Father upon Earth :
 For one is your Father, who is in Heaven.
 10. Neither be you called Masters : For one
 is your Master, Christ. 11. He that is the
 greatest among you, shall be your Servant.
 12. And whosoever shall exalt himself, shall
 be humbled : And he that humbles himself
 shall be exalted.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

The *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, as appears from this Gospel, and many other Parts of the Holy Evangelists, were very guilty of Pride and Hypocrisy, which our blessed Saviour here exposes, and severely condemns. Nevertheless, to do Honour to their Ministry, as legal Interpreters of the *Jewish* Law, then in Force ; and to preserve the Respect due to that Character, he tells his Disciples and the *Jews* ; that the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* sat in *Moses* Chair, and therefore they were obliged to hear and follow the Instructions which were given them from thence, without pretending to justify their Non-Compliance, from their Teachers not observing themselves, what they prescribed to others. Christ does not condemn the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, for interpreting the Law in a just, though strict Sense ; but blames them for not practising what they taught ; and therefore bid the *Jews* observe and do all that they should say to them according to the Law,
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but not to imitate their Practice, who said and did not.

From what our blessed Lord here says of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, and the Attention to be given to them, Christians may learn their Duty to their Pastors, the Ministers of God's Word: And Pastors may understand what they owe to the People; the Flock committed to their Care. The People are obliged to look upon the Ministers of God as his Deputies, speaking in his Name, and by his Authority. Being sent by a legal Mission and Ordination, they are Ambassadors from God, and of whom Christ says: *He who hears you, hears me: and he who despises you, despises me*, Luke x. They are then to be hearkened to with Respect and Attention; and the Instructions they give from the Pulpit, are to be complied with without criticising upon the Life and Actions of the Preacher, or examining whether he practises what he teaches. We are to suppose that he does observe what he requires of others; and if in some Things it should be apparent that he does not, his Omission will be no Justification of ours; nor is he to be contemned or despised. Our Duty is to pity and pray for him, begging of God, that he would remove the Evil from his Sanctuary. When the Sermons and Exhortations of such are heard, what they say is to be considered, and in whose Name. The Preacher may be a bad Man, but when he delivers the Truths of the Gospel, it is God, who speaks by his Mouth,

Mouth, and not to practice what we hear, is to reject God himself. From hence we may learn how, and in what Manner we are to hear Sermons: With Respect, as to the Oracles of God: With Attention to what is said; and with a sincere Desire to learn and practice our Duty. Not so, those who go to hear a Sermon, to satisfy their Curiosity; to find Matter to exercise a false and prophane Wit, in rallying and criticising the Preacher, what he says, and the Manner of his Delivery. Not so, those whom nothing can please but a florid Discourse, set off with all the Ornaments of Rhetorick, and who are disgusted at a plain, simple and practical Exhortation. Not so, in fine, those who are content to hear of Virtue and Vice in general, but will not allow the Preacher to enlarge upon particular Truths, which may touch them Home; who care not to hear of those terrible and importants Points of the Christian Religion, Death, Judgment, Hell, and the eternal Punishment of Sinners; but say, as the *Jews* did to the Prophet *Isaias*: *Loquimini nobis placentia*, *Isaias xxx.* *Tell us of agreeable Things*: Don't frighten and terrify us with these dismal Objects: But, what is this other than deceiving ourselves, and abusing one of the most excellent Means which God has established for our Salvation.

A second Instruction from this Day's Gospel, is what concerns the Pastors of the Church, who ought seriously to consider the great Weight of that Burden they have taken upon

upon them. The faithful are committed to their Care; and the Souls of their Flock will be required at their Hands, if they are wanting in their Duty to them. A Pastor's Duty is to nourish and feed his Flock with wholesome Food, sound Doctrine: And when the Laity are told they must do as their Pastor bids them, it is supposed such Pastors are careful to preach sound and orthodox Doctrine, according to the Principles of the Gospel, and what is approved by the Church. It was a Complaint made by the Prophet: *The little ones have asked for Bread, and there was no one would give it to them*, Lam. iv. Woe be to those Pastors who neglect to instruct the Faithful, and feed their Flock with the spiritual Food of God's Word. What St. Paul writes to St. Timothy, equally regards every one who is entrusted with the Care of Souls. *Preach the Word, urge in Season, and out of Season, reprove, beseech, rebuke in all Patience, and Doctrine*, 2 Tim. iv. The divine Word must be delivered with an apostolic Freedom and Courage; a Preacher that will do his Duty, must not so much regard the Inclinations of his Auditors, as their spiritual Necessities. He must deliver the serious Truths of the Gospel without any disguising Flattery, that may hide from Sinners the sad State they are in; or make them think themselves safe, and not in Danger. Holy Scripture calls Preachers the Trumpeters of the Lord. *Canite Tuba in Sion*, Joel ii. *Sound the Trumpet in Sion*. *Cry aloud*, says God to
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the Prophet *Isaias*; *exalt your Voice as a Trumpet, and denounce to my People their Wickedness, and to the House of Jacob their Sins*, *Isaias lvi.* These Expressions signify, that the Ministers of the Divine Word must be like Trumpets, to alarm, and make the Sinner tremble, and not like softer Instruments, to flatter and sooth him into a false and dangerous Security. This is the Duty of a Pastor to his Flock. This is one necessary Branch of his Charge.

To this must be added a great Care to join Example to Precept; and to enforce what they deliver from the Pulpit, by their own Practice. A Preacher who tells the People what they must do, and presses their Duty and Obligation, with never so much Energy and Force; if he does not practise what he teaches, does but little Good. It is hard to persuade any Duty necessary, when they who recommend it, do not themselves observe it. It is therefore an indispensable Duty in all the Ministers of the Divine Word, to adorn their sacred Character, by a holy and exemplary Life. This will give Weight to what they say, and cause their Instructions to be duly regarded by the People.

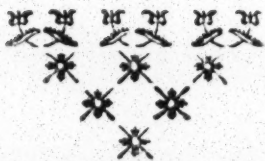
A S P I R A T I O N S.

O merciful Jesus! thou art the Author of all Grace and Holiness. Send down thy holy Spirit upon all those, whom thou hast called to thy sacred Ministry. Endue them, O Lord, with the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, that their Lives may be exemplary Patterns of what they teach. Imprint in the Hearts of every one, a due Respect for thy holy Word, and for the Ministers thereof. *May thy Priests, O Lord, be endued with Righteousness*, Psal. cxxxii. and may thy People hearken to them with Reverence and Attention, and faithfully practise what, by them, they are taught. Thou hast said: *The Priests Lips shall preserve Knowledge*, Malac. vi. And that from them we must learn our Duty. Give us Grace, so to do; and not from their Faults seek to justify our own.

Thy Goodness is great, O my God, in affording us this excellent Means of knowing our Duty to thee, and of being showed the Way to be happy for ever. Blessed for ever be the Wisdom of thy Providence, in thus consulting our Wants, and to instruct our Ignorance. Make me sensible, dear Lord, of this Favour, and to make a right Use of it, by attentively hearkening to thee speaking to me by thy Ministers. Add one Favour more, and help me to do what thou makest me know.

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May thy holy Word be the only and inviolable Rule of my Conduct, and may I never swerve from the Way of thy Commandments. May the Instructions I hear from thy Ministers prove Seed sown upon good Ground, and bring forth good Fruit to eternal Life.



W E D-



W E D N E S D A Y

In the second Week of *Lent*.

The G O S P E L, St. *Matt.* xx. 17.

AND *Jesus* going up to *Jerusalem*, took the twelve Disciples aside; and said to them: 18. Behold we go up to *Jerusalem*, and the Son of Man shall be betrayed to the Chief Priests, and to the *Scribes*, and they shall condemn him to Death. 19. And shall deliver him to the Gentiles, to be mocked, and to be scourged, and to be crucified, and the third Day he shall rise again. 20. Then came to him the Mother of the Sons of *Z be'ee* with her Sons, adoring and asking something of him. 21. Who said to her: What wilt thou? She saith to him: Say that these my two Sons, may sit, one at thy Right-Hand, the other at thy

thy Left in thy Kingdom. 22. And Jesus answered and said: You know not what you ask. Can you drink the Chalice that I shall drink? they say to him: We can. 23. He saith to them: My Chalice indeed ye shall drink; but to sit at my Right or Left-Hand, is not mine to give you, but to those for whom it is prepared by my Father. 24. And the Ten hearing it, were moved with Indignation against the two Brothers. 25. But Jesus called them to him, and said: You know that the Princes of the *Gentiles*, lord it over them; and they that are the greater, exercise Power upon them. 26. It shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be the greater among you, let him be your Minister. 27. And he that will be the first among you, shall be your Servant. 28. Even as the Son of Man is not come to be ministered to, but to minister, and to give his Life a Redemption for many.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

The Apostles, though they had left all to follow Christ, whom they acknowledged to be the promised Messiah; yet entertained, like the other *Jews*, some Thoughts of a temporal Kingdom, which they supposed our blessed Saviour would establish, and wherein St. *James* and St. *John* desired to be distinguished above the rest, but not daring to signify their Desires

to Christ, themselves, they prevailed on their Mother to intercede for them, and beg of Jesus that they might sit, the one on his Right, and the other on his Left-hand in his Kingdom. Ambition, like an ill Weed, grows apace, and if not plucked up in the Beginning, gains deep Root, and carries on to the most inordinate Desires. This pernicious Love of Preference but too often lays Hold of those who pretend to follow Christ. Unhappy Artifice of the Enemy of our Souls, to make us in Love with and hunt after Honour and Preference, while we call ourselves Disciples of the humble Jesus!

This Passion, and the Effects of it, may be seen in the Behaviour of these two Apostles. Christ, in Return to their Petition, demands of them if they could drink of the Cup of his Suffering. They readily answered, they were both able and willing, without considering either their own Strength, or what, by that Question, Jesus Christ required of them. He told their Mother, that in the Petition she made, she knew not what she asked; and therefore said to her Sons they should drink of his Cup; but for sitting at his Right or Left-Hand, they must leave it to his Disposal, and to those for whom it was designed. The Petition of St. James and St. John raised the Indignation of the other ten Disciples, and from thence Christ takes an Occasion to give them, and, in them, us, an admirable Lesson of Humility. He reprehended the Sons of Zebedee for their am-

bitious Desires; and likewise reproves the rest of the Apostles for their being angry with them on that Account. The holy Jesus, who is truly called *the Prince of Peace*, Isaiah ix. allows not of Discord and Contention among his Followers. Pride and Ambition are the Parents of Strife and Contention. Both one and the other are incompatible with being Christ's Disciples. If we would be great in his Sight, we must be little in our own, and imitate his Humility.

Humility being the proper Badge of a Christian, or a Follower of Christ, we ought to be careful to conserve and prefer it to all the outward Marks of Honour and Preference. To be humble is the particular Lesson we are to learn in the School of Christ, who says: *Learn of me, for I am meek and humble of Heart*, Matt. xi. This Virtue is so necessary, that without it, in vain we pretend to be Christians. It is the Foundation of that spiritual Building, which, if not strong and well laid, will soon fall to Ruin. Indeed, a proud Christian is an open Contradiction, nor are Light and Darknes more opposite and incompatible than Pride and Christianity, or a proud Man and a Disciple of Jesus Christ, who in his own Divine Person has given us a most perfect Example of Humility. Being the Son of God, God himself, he vouchsafed to become Man; to be born of a poor humble Virgin; to lead a poor, humble, and contemptible Life; to be called, in Scorn, the Carpenter's Son, and

to end this Life under all the Shame and Ignominy of the Cross. After this Example, shall a Christian dare to be proud? No, no; if he has any Regard to the sacred Character he bears, he will endeavour to guard himself against Pride and Ambition, as against his most cruel Enemies, who would deprive him of all that he has. There is no being secure, but by walking in the low and safe Way of Humility, without ambiating Honours and Dignities. If we had a true and right Notion of ourselves, we should not be so ready and desirous to prefer ourselves before others; but be content with a low Station, that wherein Providence has placed us, and leave it to him to say to us, if he thinks fit: *Amice, ascende superius. Friend, sit up higher, Luke xiv.* Which, whether or no, it may be in this World, will assuredly be in the next, where Humility will meet with a most glorious Recompence, and procure us a Place in the Kingdom of God; for Truth itself has declared, that *he who humbles himself shall be exalted, Luke xiv.*

ASPIRATIONS.

Saviour of the World! pluck up, and root out all the evil Weeds of Pride and Ambition from the Garden of my Heart, lest they infect and poison my Soul. Deliver me, O Lord,

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from these violent Passions, and let them not prevail over me. Make me truly humble, and content with the last and lowest Place. Let me always be willing and content to see others preferred before me, and more esteemed than I am. Teach me, O Jesus! to know myself, that knowing my own Weakness and Nothing, I may entertain no other Thoughts, than those of Humility, and thereby render myself pleasing to thee. Dear Lord, I am contented, and desire to drink of thy Cup, and partake of thy Sufferings; for the Cross I know is the Way to Heaven and the Crown; nor can I any other Way reign with thee, than by first suffering with thee, and for thee.

When I consider, O my dear and suffering Redeemer! When I consider how much thou hast suffered for me. How ought I to blush and be confounded at myself, and my own wretched Weakness? I call myself thy Disciple and Follower. With this Title ought I to take up my Cross and follow thee? O my adorable Master! I will confess before thee my Misery and my Shame. Alas! I care not to hear of Suffering, and shrink back at every little Cross I meet. Dearest Jesus, correct these Errors, this wretched Disposition of my Heart so unworthy of thee. Give me a Love of the Cross, and make me willing to suffer with thee. The Cross is the Badge of thy true Followers, and shall I be unwilling to wear it? No, my Saviour and my God, as
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Wednesday in the second Week of Lent. 119

I desire to belong to thee, I will glory in all that I may suffer with thee and for thee : And may'ſt thou acknowledge me for one of thine, and as belonging to thee, that carrying my Croſs after thee in this World, I may be crowned by thee in Heaven.



THURSDAY

✠ Kyrie Eleison ✠ Kyrie Eleison ✠ Kyrie Eleison ✠

T H U R S D A Y

In the second Week of *Lent*.

The G O S P E L, St. *Matt.* viii. 5.

TH E R E was a certain rich Man, who was cloathed with Purple and Silk; and feasted sumptuously every Day. 20. And there was a certain Beggar, named *Lazarus*, who lay at his Gate full of Sores. 21. Desiring to be filled with the Crumbs, that fell from the rich Man's Table, and no one did give him: Moreover the Dogs came, and licked his Sores. 22. And it came to pass that the Beggar died, and was carried by Angels into *Abraham's* Bosom. And the rich Man also died, and was buried in Hell. 23. And lifting up his Eyes, when he was in Torments, he saw *Abraham* afar off, and *Lazarus* in his Bosom. 24. And crying out he said: Father
Abraham

Abraham, take Pity on me, and send *Lazarus*, that he may dip the Tip of his Finger in Water to cool my Tongue, for I am tormented in this Flame. 25. And *Abraham* said to him: Son, remember thou didst receive good Things in thy Life-time, and *Lazarus* likewise evil Things: But now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. 26. And besides all this, betwixt us and you, a great Chaos is fixed; so that they who would pass from hence to you cannot, nor from thence come hither. 27. And he said: I beseech thee then Father that thou wouldst send him to the House of my Father. For I have five Brothers. 28. That he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this Place of Torments. 29. And *Abraham* said to him: They have *Moses* and the Prophets: Let them hear them. 30. But he said: No, Father *Abraham*, but if one went from the Dead to them, they will do Penance. 31. And he said to him: If they hear not *Moses*, and the Prophets, neither will they believe if one rise again from the Dead.

REFLECTIONS.

The holy Fathers are divided in their Sentiments concerning the Gospel of this Day. Some esteem it a true history; others look upon it as a Parable. Whether we consider it as one, or the other, it contains that which deserves a serious Attention; and gives a necessary Caution to the Rich, and affords Mat-
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ters of great Comfort to the Poor. The Rich may here learn what they are to expect, if they make an ill Use of what they have : And the Poor may behold how instrumental Poverty may be to their Salvation, and be a Means of their eternal Happiness. Let us make a short Reflection on the one and the other.

There was a certain rich Man who was cloathed in Purple and Silk, and fared sumptuously every Day ; and when he died, was buried in Hell, from whence he lamentably cried out : *I am tormented in these Flames.* Sad End of all his Pomp and Grandeur ! Fatal Conclusion of a Life spent in Luxury and Pleasure ! But what was the Cause of his Damnation ? Was he damned for being rich ? No. Riches themselves are not evil ; they have no intrinsic Malice ; they are Gifts of God, and the Effects of his Bounty, and may be of great Use towards gaining Heaven. *Abraham* was rich ; *David* was rich, and many other Saints and holy Men, who sanctified themselves in the Midst of Riches and Abundance. Was he damned for being cloathed in Purple and Silk ? No, it is no where forbid ; for Persons of Distinction to be clad magnificently. *Hester* and *Judith* wore rich and sumptuous Apparel, What then could be the Cause why this unfortunate rich Man. when he died, was buried in Hell ? Many Reasons may be assigned, and which are, not obscurely, signified in this History or Parable, and will damn all those rich Men who follow his Example.

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The Scripture does not mention any Thing of his having gained his Riches, by unlawful Means, by Injustice, or Fraud; but in the Supposition that he acquired his Riches by those Means, we need not seek any other Cause of his Damnation: And whoever grows rich by such Ways, will find he has made a dear Bargain, since Riches thus procured will certainly plunge the Soul into Hell. But supposing this rich Man to have entered upon a large Estate, by Inheritance; or to have acquired a fine Fortune by just and honourable Means, we shall find his Damnation to have been caused by a wrong Use of Riches, and that this was the Cause of his eternal Misfortune. Though Riches in themselves are not evil, yet if we make no other Use of them than to serve our Pride and Vanity; to regale our sensual Appetites; to spend them in criminal Excesses; in Pomp and Show, Folly and Extravagance, they will then prove the sad Cause of our eternal Ruin: And, like this rich Man, when we die, our Souls will be buried in Hell. But that which seems to have been the principal Cause of his Damnation, was a Want of Mercy and Charity to the Poor. *Lazarus* lay at his Gate full of Sores, and only desired the Crumbs which fell from his table, and those he refused to give; more cruel and hard hearted than the Dogs, who came and licked the Sores of this poor Beggar. Here let those rich Persons consider and tremble, who have no Compassion for the Poor, drive them
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from their Gates, and refuse to bestow any Relief upon them. Such hard-hearted Rich, as they share with *Dives* in his Crime, must expect to partake of his Punishment. That this was the Case of this rich Man, may be gathered from what *Abraham* said to him: *Son, remember that thou didst receive good Things in thy Life-time, and Lazarus evil Things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.* He was justly denied a Drop of Water to cool his parched Tongue, who had denied *Lazarus* the Crumbs which fell from his Table. And such will be the Fate of all uncharitable rich Persons, to whom Christ will say, at the last Day: *Go ye Cursed into everlasting Fire; for I was hungry, and ye gave me not to eat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me not to drink. In as much as you did it not to one of the least of these, neither have you done it to me,* Matt. xxv. Let this be well considered by those who are rich; let them learn to make a right Use of their riches; and while they are allowed to maintain their Rank, and live according to their Station in the World, to remember, what goes beyond this; whatever is spent in Pride, Vanity and Excess and criminal Diversions, will turn to a very bad Account. Above all, let them learn to be charitable to the Poor, and be always ready and willing to relieve them in their Wants and Necessities. Such a Use of our Riches will convert them to Piety, and make them fit Instruments for eternal Bliss. Thus we may enjoy
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the good Things of this World, and not lose those of the other.

But, if the Rich behold a terrible and instructive Example, in the Person of *Dives*; the Poor may find Matter of very great Consolation in that of *Lazarus*. He was not only poor, but full of Sores, and in so great Want, as to beg for the Crumbs that fell from the rich Man's Table. A deplorable Condition, if considered only with Regard to this World; but truly happy with Respect to the other. He died and was carried by Angels into *Abraham's Bosom*. Happy Poverty which meets with so glorious a Recompence! Let this comfort you, O you who here labour under the Hardships of Want and Indigence! Let this make you easy, you, who by the Dispensations of Providence, are obliged to labour and toil, to procure a poor and hard Living; you are the Friends of God, who has chosen to himself the *Poor of this World, rich in Grace*, Jac. xxi. Christ has said: *Blessed ye Poor, because yours is the Kingdom of God. Blessed ye that are hungry now, because ye shall be filled*, Luke ix. You are in a State which Christ himself chose, and which he has sanctified in his own Person. He was poor, and his poverty was so great, that he said of himself: *The Foxes have Holes, and the Birds of the Air Nests, but the Son of Man has not where to lay his Head*, Luke ix. Poverty then is no such Misfortune as the World esteems it. It is a safe and secure State, and frees us from an infinite Number
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of Dangers, and Occasions of Sin, to which Riches and Abundance expose us. All the Hardships of a poor and low State will be abundantly recompensed by the Glories of Heaven. Poverty here, and *Abraham's* Bosom hereafter, is infinitely better than the Purple and Riches of *Dives* followed by his Torments in Hell Fire.

But then it must be considered, that as it was not his Riches, but the ill Use of them, that damned *Dives*; so it was not his Poverty alone, but bearing it with Patience, as he did, that saved *Lazarus*. As we may be rich, and be saved; so we may be poor, and be lost: And shall be so, if we murmur and repine at the Providence of God. If we seek to help our Poverty by unlawful Means. If we are poor in Fact, but rich and covetous in our Desires, and not content with our State; if working for this World, we labour nothing for the other, and neglect our Duty to God. In these Cases Poverty will be of no Advantage to us. It will be our Misfortune here, but doubly so hereafter. To prevent which we must to our outward Poverty, join that of the Spirit, by being truly content with our Lot; sanctifying the Hardships of our State, by a patient Submission to the Will of God; and make it our greatest Care to be rich in Grace, and good Works, thereby to lay up lasting Treasures in Heaven. This is that Poverty which our Blessed Saviour pronounces Blessed. This is that Poverty, in which, if we die, the Angels will

will carry our departing Souls into *Abraham's Bosom*.

A S P I R A T I O N S.

Riches, O my God ! are from thee, they are thy Gift. If thou bestowest them upon us. Give us also Grace to make a right Use of them. Alas ! they are dangerous, and may prove the Cause of our Ruin. Let us not fix our Hearts upon them. Let us rather despise and condemn them, that we may only search after the Riches of thy Kingdom. Let me not set my Affections upon the Things of this World, so as to neglect my Duty to thee ; nor for the Poor and transitory Enjoyments of the Earth, hazard the Loss of eternal Life, and the Glories of Heaven. If thou art pleased to give me the good Things of this World, I will endeavour to use them to thy Honour and Glory, and the Benefit of those in Want. If thou wilt that I be poor, Lord, I am content. Poverty shall be welcome. I desire to suffer here, that I may be happy hereafter

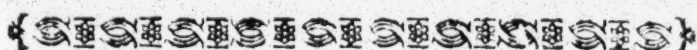
When I consider, O my God, the sad Fate of this rich Man ; how ought I to fear and tremble, lest I make an ill Use of what thy Bounty has bestowed upon me. Whatever thou bestowest upon me is thy Gift, and ought I not to be grateful to thee for the same ? Shall I live in Plenty and Ease, and have no Pity and Compassion for the Poor and Needy ? No, O thou most bountiful and liberal Lord God ! I will
feed

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feed the Hungry, give Drink to the Thirsty, Cloths to the Naked, and help the Poor to the utmost of my Power. It is thus I will return back to thee, what I have so plentifully received from thee. I will endeavour to be rich in Heaven, and there my Treasures and my Heart shall be. May Acts of Charity transport them thither. Thus will I hope that to the good Things thou givest me in this Life, thou wilt mercifully add these greater good Things of the next. And thou hast said : *Blessed are the Merciful, for they shall obtain Mercy.*



FRIDAY



F R I D A Y

In the second Week of *Lent*.

The G O S P E L, St. *Matt.* xxi. 33.

TH E R E was a Man, an Houfholder, who planted a Vineyard, and compaffed it about with a Hedge : and dug in it a Wine- prefs, and built a Tower, and let it out to Husbandmen ; and went into a ftrange Country. 34. And when the Time of the Fruits drew near, he fent his Servants to the Husbandmen, that they might receive the Fruits thereof. 35. And the Husbandmen having laid Hold of his Servants, one they beat, another they killed, and another they ftoned. 36. Again he fent other Servants more than the former ; and they did the like by them. 37. And laft of all he fent to them his Son, faying :

ing : They shall reverence my Son. 38. But the Husbandmen seeing the Son, said among themselves : This is the Heir, come let us kill him, and we shall have his Inheritance. 39. And having laid Hold of him, they cast him out of the Vineyard and killed him. 40. When therefore the Lord of the Vineyard shall come, what will he do to those Husbandmen. 41. They say to him : Those evil Men he will bring to an evil End, and he will let out his Vineyard to other Husbandmen, that shall render him Fruit in due Season. 42. Jesus said to them : Have you never read in the Scriptures, the Stone which the Builders rejected, the same is become the Head of the Corner ? By the Lord this has been done, and it is wonderful in our Eyes. 43. Therefore I say to you, that the Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a Nation yielding the Fruits thereof. 44. And he that shall fall upon this Stone, shall be brokeh, but on whom this Stone shall fall, it shall grind him to Powder. 45. And when the Chief Priests and *Pharisees* had heard his Parables, they knew that he spoke of them. 46. And seeking to lay Hands on him, they feared the Multitudes, because they held him as a Prophet.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

By the Parable in this Gospel, our Blessed Saviour reproached the *Jews* with their long and great Ingratitude to God, and their horrible Abuses of his Favours; and at the same Time threatens them with a severe Punishment, the taking away the Kingdom of God from them. The Chief Priests and *Pharisees* were sensible that the Parable was designed for them, and would willingly have made Christ then feel their Resentment, but were afraid of the People who esteemed our Blessed Lord as a Prophet. Nor does this significant Parable less concern Christians than the *Jews*; it is a prophetick and instructive Lesson for us; and, herein we may behold what Christ has done for us, in establishing his Church, that mysterious Vineyard, which he has planted, and watered with his Blood. We may also see the Ingratitude of but too many Christians, how grievously they abuse the Graces conferred upon them; and may tremble at the terrible Judgment here denounced against such.

If we consider what Jesus Christ has done for us, by establishing his Church, we shall find it to be the Effects of infinite Labour and Pains which he underwent while upon Earth; and for which he shed every Drop of his sacred Blood, which was the Cement by which he raised up his mysterious Edifice, and of which every Christian is a Part. To conserve
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this Church thus established, he continually governs and directs it by the holy Spirit ; he has ordained in it the holy Sacraments, those Fountains and Channels of Divine Grace, especially that of the holy Altar, in which he gives us his own sacred Body and Blood, to be the spiritual Food and Life of our Souls ; and as a sure Pledge of that infinite Glory and Happiness, which he will give us in Heaven, if here we diligently labour in his Vineyard, and, like faithful Husbandmen, render him Fruit in due Season. This God has done for us, and from hence we may learn the Happiness of being Christians, of belonging to this Vineyard, the holy Catholick Church, while by the secret but just Dispensations of his Providence, many are left in Infidelity, and Unbelief. It is very natural to suppose that such great and singular Favours, should meet with a suitable and grateful Return ; but, alas ! the greatest Part of Christians show themselves as insensible, as unworthy of what God has done for them ; and make no other Use of his Mercies than to abuse them.

Ingratitude is a Vice so very odious, that every one cries out and condemns it, and yet nothing more common, especially with Regard to God, and that in every Respect. In this Vice we may observe four different Degrees. The first is, not to make a suitable Return for Benefits received. The second, to forget those Benefits. The third, to return Evil for Good. The fourth, to make Use of the

the Favours received, to do Harm to the Benefactor and Donor. Every one of these Degrees may be seen in the Conduct of the Husbandmen in the Gospel. It was a Favour the Householder did them in letting them his Vineyard ; and they ungratefully refused to let him have any Fruit out of it. They forgot that the Vineyard was only let to them, and acted as if they were sole Lords and Masters of it. They returned Evil for Good, in abusing his Servants, and murdering his Son. They took an occasion from the Vineyard he let to them, to commit this horrible Outrage to the good Householder. A sad, but true Copy of the extream Ingratitude of many Christians. First, they make no Return to the Favours God has done them ; they neglect his holy Graces ; think not of the Affair of their Salvation, and regard nothing but the Pleasures and Enjoyments of this Life. They, secondly, forget what he has done for them, and bury all Remembrance of their Obligations to him in an idle, sensual and worldly Life. Thirdly, they return Evil for Good. The more he is bountiful, the more they are ungrateful ; and in the last Place make Use of the Benefits they receive, to displease and offend him. Their Health is abused to offend him by Irregularity, Intemperance and Excess. Their Riches to displease him by Pride, Vanity and Extravagance. Their Wit and Judgment to rally and ridicule the serious Truths of the Gospel. His Graces, the Sacraments of the Church,

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are often prophaned by an unworthy Usage, and too often made a Skreen to Hypocrisy, and cover some private and secret Design. This, I must own, is a melancholy Portrait of Christianity ; but the apparent and notorious Conduct of many, will excuse me from any Exaggeration and make it appear too true.

But what will be the Consequence of this Conduct, so shamefully contrary to a Christian's Character ? Can such expect less than the severest Judgment ? The severest Punishment God can inflict upon these ungrateful Christians, is to take from them those Graces which were designed for their Salvation, and to give them to others, who, thereby, may be saved in their Place. The Husbandmen in the Gospel were thus treated ; the Vineyard was taken from them, and let out to others. The *Jews* were punished in this Manner for their stubborn Ingratitude. The Kingdom of God was taken from them and given to the *Gentiles*, who, by the Preaching of the Apostles came to the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, while they remain a vagabond Race, abandoned by God, banished their Country ; without Temple, without Sacrifice, and the Scorn of all the World. How terrible this Punishment, and how ought we to tremble at it ! What the *Jews* have suffered for their Wickedness and Ingratitude has been also the sad Fate of many Christian Kingdoms and States : The mournful Lot of many once flourishing Churches, whole

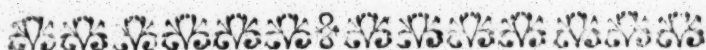
whose Candlesticks are removed and Light extinguished. The same Conduct God observes towards particular Persons : when they abuse his Graces, he withdraws them, and leaves such to themselves and the miserable Consequences of this Privation of Grace.

ASPIRATIONS.

My God, how much am I obliged to bless and praise thy holy Name ! How much hast thou done for me ; and how many Favours hast thou bestowed upon me ! Thou hast called me to the Knowledge of thee, and made me a Member of the Catholick Church wherein thou hast afforded me excellent Means to secure my Salvation. This thou hast done for me ; but what Return have I made to thee ? Alas ! my God, I am covered with Confusion, at the Sight of my Ingratitude. How have I slighted thy Favours, and abused thy Mercies ! I have just Reason to tremble and fear lest thou shouldst withdraw thy Goodness from me. I confess and acknowledge my Unworthiness ; and implore thy Mercy. O God, to all thy other Favours, add one more. Give me a true and sincere Sorrow for my past Offences, and Grace never to offend thee more. May I now walk worthy of the Grace and Favour thou hast shown me, and make it my only Study and Care, daily to offer to thee, the good Fruit of Love and Gratitude, in obeying thee.

If Love, dear Lord, requires a due Return of Love. If we ought to love as we are loved. How much am I bound to love thee, O thou who hast loved me with an eternal Love, and hast conferred so many Favours upon me? May the Consideration of thy boundless Love soften my hard Heart, and make it melt away in the Flames of a reciprocal ardent Love for thee. O thou only true and worthy Object of Love, let me love thee in the best and most perfect Manner I am able; for I can never love thee too much, nor as thou deservest to be loved. Burn, O my Soul with Love of a God so amiable, so deserving in himself; and so bountiful and so good to thee. O my God, I desire to love thee with all my Heart, with all my Mind, and with all my Strength, and that purely for thyself alone. O may every Respiration I breathe be an Act of most fervent and perfect Love of thee! I will love thee all my Life. I will love thee for ever, and O may I cease to be at all, when I cease to love thee, O my Lord and my God!

SATURDAY



S A T U R D A Y

In the second Week of *Lent.*

The G O S P E L, St. *Luke* xv. 11.

AND he said a certain Man had two Sons :
12. And the Younger of them said to
his Father : Father give me the Portion of
Substance that falleth to me : and he divided
his Substance unto them. 13. And not many
Days after, the younger Son gathering all toge-
ther, travelled into a far Country, and there
wasted his Substance, living riotously. 14.
And after he had spent all, there came a great
Famine in that Country, and he began to be
in Want. 15. And he went and put himself
under a Citizen in that Country. And he sent
him to his Farm to feed Swine. 16. And he
was desirous to fill his Belly with the Husks the
Swine did eat ; and no Man gave unto him.

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17. And

17. And entering into himself he said : How many hired Servants in my Father's House have Plenty of Bread, and I perish here with Hunger. 18. I will arise, and will go to my Father, and say to him ; Father I have sinned against Heaven and before thee. 19. I am not now worthy to be called thy Son : Make me as one of thy hired Servants. 20. And rising up he came to his Father ; and when he was yet afar off, his Father saw him, and was moved with Compassion, and running to him, fell upon him and kissed him. 21. And the Son said to him : Father I have sinned against Heaven, and before thee, I am not now worthy to be called thy Son. 22. And the Father said to his Servants ; bring forth quickly the first Robe, and put it on him, and put him a Ring on his Hand, and Shoes on his Feet. 23. And bring hither the fatted Calf, and kill it, and let us eat and make merry. 24. Because this my Son was Dead, and is come to Life again : was lost and is found : and they began to be merry. 25. Now his elder Son was in the Field ; and when he came near to the House, he heard Musick and Dancing. 26. And he called one of the Servants, and asked what these Things meant. 27. And he said to him : Thy Brother is come, and thy Father hath killed the fatted Calf, because he hath received him safe. 28. And he was angry, and would not go in : His Father therefore going out, began to intreat him. 29. And answering, he said to his Father : Behold

hold I serve thee so many Years, and have never transgressed thy Commands, and yet thou never gavest me a Kid to make merry with my Friends. 30. But as soon as this thy Son is come, who has devoured his Substance with Harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted Calf. 31. But he said : Son, thou art always with me, and all I have is thine. 32. But it was fit we should feast and rejoice, because this thy Brother was dead, and is come to Life again, he was lost and is found.

REFLECTIONS.

The Son of God having often declared that he came into this World, to seek and to save that which was lost, would by that Declaration, make it appear, how sincerely he desires that no one should perish, but that every one should be saved by him. The same gracious Disposition, in Regard of Sinners he demonstrates by many significant Parables, or Representations. But in the Parable which makes the Gospel of this Day, the Mercy of God, is set forth in such a tender and engaging Manner, as cannot but be of the greatest Comfort and Consolation to all penitent Sinners, who may here behold what kind and tender Reception they may hope to find, if, like this prodigal Son, they will but return to their Father's House, after having, like him, consumed their Substance in riotous Living, and reduced themselves to the greatest Misery and

Want. This prodigal Child demanded of his Father the Portion that belonged to him ; his indulgent Parent complied with his Desires ; and soon after he abandoned the House of his Father, went into a far Country, and there consumed his Fortune, and spent it in riotous Living : Falling into extream Poverty and Want, and being obliged to feed Swine, the Misery he endured opened his Eyes, he then saw his Crime and his Folly in leaving his Father's House : he considered how the hired Servants of his Father lived in Plenty, while he was ready to perish for Hunger. He called to Mind the tender Affection of his Father, and from thence began to hope he might be again received by him, if not as a Son, which he acknowledged himself unworthy of, at least as a hired Servant. This Hope made him resolve to try : *I will rise up*, said he, *and go to my Father*. He did so immediately, and when he was yet afar off, the Father saw him, was moved with Compassion, ran to him, and embraced him. The penitent Son acknowledges his Fault : *Father I have sinned against Heaven and before thee* ; and begs to be admitted among the Number of the Servants. But the tender Parent orders the best Robe to be brought out and put upon him, and puts a Ring also on his Finger, and then commands the fatted Calf to be killed, that they might rejoice and be merry for his safe Return.

This prodigal Son, as to the first Part of his Conduct, is but too exactly followed by Sinners,

ners, who desert the House of their Heavenly Father, and consume their Substance, and dissipate his Graces and Favours, and when by a Life of Sin and Folly, of Liberty and Excess they are reduced to the greatest Streights, then they are at a Loss what to do. The Devil who induced them to tread in the Steps of the Prodigal, and with him walk in the Ways of Sin, and so to go farther and farther from their Father's House, does all he can to hinder them from imitating his Repentance, and to prevent their saying: *I will rise up and go to my Father, and will say, Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before thee.* For this End he sets before them their Sins, in the worst Light, and endeavours to persuade them, that they cannot obtain Pardon; that the Justice of God is too much provoked to afford any Mercy to them; and that if they would repent, it is too late, that they have no Time to do Penance, or make any Satisfaction for the Multitude, and Enormity of their Sins. Thus having first perswaded them to Sin, he then endeavours to make them despair. This Artifice of the Devil is not to be minded: Nor ought any Sinner, how many and great soever his Crimes may be, to despair. The infinite Mercy of God is greater far than the Wickedness of any Sinner; and though the Justice of God is highly provoked by a long Habit, and Continuance in Sin; yet his Mercy is ready, and will forgive upon a sincere Repentance. Nor must a Sinner believe the Devil, when he sug-

gests that there is no Time for Repentance. It always is better late than never. One can't be converted too late, when one is seriously converted; and though a Sinner may not have long to live, he has Time enough to save his Soul. He will always find Mercy enough to save him, and Time enough to be saved in, if he is sincerely penitent, and truly converted. This is grounded upon the unerring Word of God, who has positively declared, that at what Time soever a Sinner is converted, and does Penance, he shall save his Soul, and live, *Ezek xxxviii.* This is further confirmed by the Examples of *Mary Magdalen*, the *Samaritan Woman*, *St. Peter* and *St. Paul*, the *Thief on the Cross*, and many others, who were very great Sinners, and not only obtained Mercy, but also became very great Saints. Though we have offended God never so much, he is always ready and willing to Pardon us. *As I live, saith the Lord, I desire not the Death of a Sinner, Ezek. xxxii.* How happy are we, says *Tertulian, Lib. de Penit.* since God engages himself, and that by an Oath, to show Mercy to a Sinner, if he will do Penance! But we must be doubly miserable not to believe God, even when he swears in our Favour. What Encouragement this to our Hopes! If any one is lost, it is their own Fault, and because they despair, and even reject that Mercy God offers to them. To such it may be truly said: *Thy Perdition is of thyself, O Israel, Hosea xiii.*

A S P I R A T I O N S.

O Bounty of God! How soon and how easily is he reconciled to penitent Sinners! What a Difference between thy Anger, O Lord, and that of Man's! when we are offended by any one, how hard and difficult it is to appease us! But however and justly thou art offended, thou art soon reconciled. A penitent Tear, an humble Acknowledgment, immediately stops thy Justice, and opens the Door of Mercy, to enter into thy Grace and Favour. A few Moments given to God suffice to procure an Eternity of Happiness. What Bounty! what Mercy! Yet, let not this thy facile Goodness, dear Lord, be abused by us, to a wanton Neglect of our Duty to thee, nor to a presumptuous Boldness to go on in Sin. Let us hope in thy Mercy, but fear to provoke thy Justice. Let us not by Ingratitudes and Impenitence provoke thee to abandon us, and leave us to die in our Sins.

O Father of Heaven! O my indulgent and tender Parent! what shall I say? I have gone from thy House, I have dissipated and wasted those Goods of Grace, those Blessings which thou hast bestowed upon me. Reduced as I am, to the greatest Misery, what can I do, but to have Recourse to thee with a penitent and a contrite Heart? I will arise and go to thee, my heavenly Father, and will say: I have sinned against Hea-

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ven and before thee. Have Mercy, O my Father, and receive me, if not as a Child, as one of the least of thy Servants. Cloathe me with the Robes of thy Mercy. O give me the Kifs of Peace, and may the Angels of God rejoice at the Conversion of me a Sinner. May I never more go astray from, or abandon thee. I desire from this Moment to continue faithful to thee, that I may, one Day be admitted into thy Mansions of Bliss, and there praise and glorify thee, there love and enjoy thee for ever.





THIRD SUNDAY in LENT.

The GOSPEL, St. *Luke*, xi. 14.

AND he was casting out a Devil, which was dumb ; and when he cast out the Devil, the dumb Man spoke, and the People were in Admiration at it. 15. But some of them said : By *Belzebub* Prince of the Devils he casteth out Devils. 16. And others tempting him demanded of him a Sign from Heaven. 17. And he seeing their Thoughts, said to them : Every Kingdom divided against itself shall be brought to Desolation, and a House upon a House shall fall. 18. And if Satan be also divided against himself, how shall his Kingdom stand, because you say, that by *Belzebub* I cast out Devils. 19. But if I by *Belzebub* cast out Devils, your Children by whom do they cast them out ? Therefore they shall be
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your Judges. 20. Now if I cast out Devils, by the Finger of God, doubtless the Kingdom of God is come upon you. 21. When a strong Man armed guardeth his Court, the Things of which he is possessed are safe. 22. But if a stronger than he come upon him and overcome him, he will take away all his Armour wherein he trusted, and divide his Spoils. 23. He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth. 24. When an unclean Spirit is gone out of a Man, he walketh through dry Places, seeking for Rest: and not finding, he saith: I will return into my House whence I came out. 25. And when he is come, he findeth it swept and garnished. 26. Then he goeth and taketh with him seven other Spirits more wicked than himself and entering in they dwell there. And the last State of that Man becomes worse than the first. 27. And it came to pass as he spoke these Things, a certain Woman from the Croud raising her Voice, said to him: Blessed is the Womb that bore thee, and the Paps that gave thee Suck. 28. But he said: Yea, rather blessed are they, who hear the Word of God and keep it.

REFLECTIONS.

There are Devils which are dumb, and there are Devils which speak much ; that is to say, the Devil sometimes makes Men to speak, and sometimes to hold their Tongue. When a Christian should speak for the Glory of God, to defend, and appear in the Cause of Virtue, and to discountenance Vice, then to be silent, is to be possessed in some Measure by a dumb Devil, and which must be cast out by the Power of *Jesus*, in considering our Character of Christians, and the Obligations we lie under of maintaining that Character, and not to betray it by a criminal Silence, when the Honour and Glory of God, and the Good of our Neighbour, call upon us to speak boldly and with Freedom. But when we give full Scope to our Tongue, in speaking ill of our Neighbour, in lessening his Reputation, and blackening his Character, by Calumny and Detraction, then it is that the Devil speaks with infernal Eloquence ; and, as his Instruments we do infinite Prejudice to ourselves and others. Of these Sort of Persons the World is full, and no Vice may be said to be more common and universal than this Sin of Detraction. It is so general that scarce any Company or Place is free from it ; and while it is condemned by every one, few or none are to be found, who are not guilty of it. The holy Scripture informs us, that the Holy Ghost descended

scended upon the Apostles, in the Form of Tongues; but how different is the Language of this Divine Spirit from that which we daily hear from the Mouths of Christians, who call themselves Christ's Disciples, and pretend to believe and profess the holy Doctrine he taught! The Language of that Divine Spirit is Charity, Bounty, and Truth. But the Tongue of a Detractor, is of Hatred, Division, Malice, and Lies. So that we may venture to affirm the Sin of Detraction to be in some Sense, a Sin against the Holy Ghost; for nothing can be more contrary to that Spirit of Charity and Union, than what breaks Charity, and causes Strife, Contention, Discord, and Division. Nothing can be more opposite to that Spirit of Bounty and Goodness, than Detraction which breathes nothing but Malice, and produces nothing but Evil. Nothing can be more against that Spirit of Truth, than what is made up of Falshood, and Lies. Herein we may see how contrary is this malignant Spirit to that of Jesus Christ.

The Spirit of Jesus Christ is a Spirit of Union and Charity. Hence he prayed to his eternal Father, that his Disciples might be one, as they were one, *John xvii.* Not by a Unity of Nature, as the Father and the Son are one and the same God, but by a Unity of Charity and Love. That as there is but one God, one Faith, and one Baptism, so all might be one, in Love. And this was that admirable Effect which the Holy Ghost produced in
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the primitive Christians and Believers, of whom it is said, in the Acts of the Apostles, that *they were all of one Heart*, Acts iv. But, alas ! the Sin of Detraction destroys this happy and christian Union, it separates those who are united by the strongest and most sacred Bonds. Christians are all Members of the Church of Christ. All Sons of that holy Mother, who embraces all as her Children, and who employs her Prayers and Tears, her Exhortations and Admonitions, that a fraternal Charity and Union may always reign among them. But for all the Intreaties and Tears of a Mother so tender, the Detractor stabs his Brother in the most sensible Part, and takes a Pleasure in robbing him of what is more dear to him than his Life.

The Holy Ghost is further a Spirit of Bounty and Goodness ; but in Opposition to that, the Spirit of Detraction is the Cause of infinite Evils, as being the Product of unchristian Malice and Envy. The Spirit of God may be filled a Circle of Bounty which passes from one Good to another, and bestows nothing but Graces and Favours. This is that benevolent Spirit which ought to shine out in the Conduct of Christians. But how little of this appears in the Behaviour of those, who take Pleasure to detract and speak ill of their Neighbours ! On the contrary, Detraction may be called a Circle always moving from one Evil to another, by continually blowing up the Coals of Strife and Contention. It is a malignant Poi-
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son, which infects every Thing, corrupts every Thing, and spares nothing.

The Spirit of God is a Spirit of Truth; but Detraction is made up of Falshood and Lies; and at best proceeds from false Suspicions, and uncertain Grounds. It is an Abomination in the Sight of God, and justly detested by all sincere and good Christians; nevertheless, though so great and damnable a Sin, is committed every Day, and without Scruple or Concern. After this sad, but just Description of this Sin, we might justly wonder to find it so common among Christians, were there not daily and demonstrative Proofs given that it is so. How many are there who are continually speaking ill of their Neighbour, and censuring their Conduct? Is not the Defects of others the common Topick of Conversation? Is not the Actions and Behaviour of those who are absent the Subject of Entertainment; and every one erects a Court of Judicature, where he sets up himself for Judge, and calls his Neighbour to the Bar, and without hearing or considering what may be said in his Favour, immediately condemns him? And what are the Grounds of such Censures, but weak and slight Surmises; a meer Report and Hearsay which Envy or Malice esteem as sufficient Proof for our uncharitable and rash Judgments? How often does Pride, and a vain Conceit of ourselves, put us upon lessening the Reputation of another,

ther, that we may build our own upon the Ruin of his? If his Virtue and Innocence are too clear to be openly denied; how often is it diminished with a But for all that: Notwithstanding his Virtue, he is so, and so; he said, or did this or that. O that Christians would seriously reflect upon the Nature of this Sin, how odious it is to God, and how prejudicial to themselves. *For with what Judgment you have judged, says Christ, you shall be judged: and with what Measure you have measured, it shall be measured to you again, Matt. vii. And Judgment without Mercy, to those who have not shown Mercy, Jac. ii.*

The best Remedy for this Evil; and the best Preservative against this Sin, is always to remember, and act according to that Golden Rule, of doing as we would be done by. The same tender Regard we desire our Neighbour should have for our Reputation, let us have for his. If we have the Misfortune to do amiss, or commit a Fault: we would desire that others, before they condemn us, should consider whether it may not be an Error of Judgment, and not of the Will; that they would consider that our Intention might be good; and that Indiscretion or Inadvertence might be the Cause of it. Let us observe this Method in forming our Judgments of others. And always put the best Construction we can upon our Neighbour's Words and Actions. Above all we must take Care not to impose false Crimes on our Neighbours; nor discover his secret Sins, unless

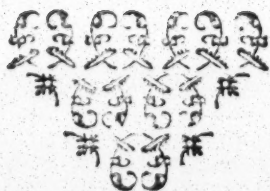
unless to those whom it may concern, and for his Benefit.

A S P I R A T I O N S.

O *Jesus*, the bright Mirrour of Truth and Justice! Send a Cherubim, who, with Coals from thy holy Altar may purify my Heart and Lips from this crying Sin of Slander and Detraction. Let me never give Way to what is odious to thee, so prejudicial to my Neighbour, and so hurtful to myself. Let Charity guide and direct me to put the most charitable Constructions upon the Actions of others, that I may find Mercy at thy Hands, when I come to be judged at thy Tribunal. May I leave others to thee, who art the supreme Judge of all Mankind, and only mind and take Care of myself, that I may not incur the Guilt of rash Judgment, nor offend thee, or hurt my Brethren by Censure and Detraction, and hazard my own Salvation.

Ah my Soul! Let us take Care of this sad Evil of Detraction, or speaking ill of any one. Let the Reputation of thy Neighbour be as dear to thee as thine own. O my God set a Watch before my Mouth, and keep the Door of my Lips, that I may not offend in my Tongue, *Psal.* 140. that I may not offend thee, nor hurt my Neighbour, or prejudice my own Soul. O God of Love! Mirrour of most perfect Charity, let me, in some Measure, strive to imitate thee, and copy after thee,
that

that I may never say or do any Thing to the Prejudice of any one. May I glorify thee in those Gifts and Graces thou bestowest upon others, and magnify thee for thy Mercies to all Mankind. O may the Spirit of Love and Charity reign in all our Hearts, that we may mutually and sincerely love one another. Preserve us, dear Lord, in Peace, Unity and Concord, that with one Heart and one Voice we may praise and glorify thee here, and be for ever happy with thee hereafter.



M O N D A Y



M O N D A Y

In the third Week of *Lent*.

The GOSPEL, St. *Luke* iv. 23.

AND he said to them : Doubtless you will say to me this Similitude : Physician cure thyself : As great Things as we have heard done in *Capharnaum*, do also here in thy own Country. 24. And he said, Amen I say to you, that no Prophet is accepted in his own Country. 25. In Truth I say to you, there were many Widows in the Days of *Elias* in *Israel*, when Heaven was shut up three Years and six Months, when there was a great Famine in all the Land. 26. And *Elias* was sent to none of them, only to a Widow Woman in *Sarepta* of *Sidon*. 27. And there were many Lepers in *Israel* in the Time of the Prophet

phet *Elizeus*, and none of them was made clean but *Naaman* the Syrian. 28. And all they in the Synagogue hearing those Things were filled with Anger. 29. And they rose up and thrust him out of the City, and led him to the Brow of the Hill on which their City was built, that they might cast him down headlong. 30. But he passing through the Midst of them went his Way.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

Zeal when tempered and governed by Discretion, is certainly an excellent Virtue and a necessary Ingredient to the Character of a good Christian. Nothing is more noble and perfect than a well ordered Zeal for the Good of others. It is copying after God himself, and imitating him in the most excellent of all his Works. But where Zeal is not rightly terminated, nor well ordered, it ceases to be a Virtue, and becomes the most dangerous Evil. The Zeal which the *Pharisees* showed, was a hot, fiery Zeal, the Effect of their Pride, and Hypocrisy, and was neither terminated in the Glory of God, or the Good of their Neighbour; nor governed either by Reason or Religion; and for this our Blessed Lord frequently reproved them, but though his Reproofs were given in the mildest and most engaging Manner, and with a sincere Desire of their Conversion, they made no other Return than to redouble their false and injurious Calumnies of his Person
and

and Doctrine, and even attempted to take away his Life. Because he reproved their Obstinacy and Infidelity, and signified to them, that notwithstanding their boasted Prerogatives of being the Children of *Abraham*, and the peculiar People of God, having rendered themselves unworthy of the Continuance of his Favour, that Mercy they rejected, should be shown to the *Gentiles*. Intimating this to them, by the Cure of *Naaman* the *Syrian*, and the Prophet *Elias* being sent to a poor Widow of *Sarepta*, they laid Hold of him with an Intent to fling him down the Hill, on which the City of *Jerusalem* was built; but he passed through them, and went away, for his Time of Suffering not being come, they could not execute their Design upon him.

Among other Instructions, which the Gospel of this Day affords, we may learn the Qualities of a true Christian Zeal for the Glory of God, and the Conversion of others. This our Blessed Saviour teaches us, and in the best of Methods, his own incomparable Example. From him we may learn that true and warrantable Zeal for others must be measured by, and conformable to the Zeal we have, or ought to have for ourselves. It must be proved and enlightened, by the Care we have of ourselves: where this is wanting it is to be suspected as false, or at least doubtful.

These are the Properties or Characters of a true Christian Zeal, such as is recommended to us in the Gospel: and however ardent and
flaming

flaming Zeal may appear, if it has not these Qualities, nor is modelled by these Rules, it will prove false Coin, glittering, but without any intrinsic Value. The Order of Charity requires that our Zeal be shown first upon ourselves, and then towards others. If we have no Care for ourselves, it is hard to conceive we should have any sincere Regard to our Neighbours: And I believe the Observation is both true and general, that those who are indifferent about their own Salvation, give themselves no great Concern or Trouble about the Salvation of others, however nearly related to them. I speak not here of those whose Character and Office oblige them to take Care of those under them, but of Christians in general, who ought to have a Zeal for one another's spiritual Good. Such ought in the first Place to take Care of themselves, that their Lives be exactly regular, conformable to the Maxims of the Gospel, and then they are well qualified to exercise their Zeal towards their Neighbour, and so endeavour to reclaim him from Vice to Virtue. For nothing can be more ridiculous, for Example, than for one given to a Habit of swearing, to tell another of it, and reprove him for that Sin. Or for a Drunkard to preach up Sobriety. The Answer to such would undoubtedly be: *Physician cure thyself.* We lose all just Pretence to reform others when we do not reform ourselves; and for this Reason our blessed Lord gives a severe Reproof to such Reformers: *Why dost thou*

158 Monday in the third Week of Lent.

thou see a Mote in thy Brother's Eye, and does not behold the Beam in thy own Eye? Hypocrite, first draw the Beam out of thy own Eye, and then shalt thou see to draw the Mote out of thy Brother's Eye, Matt. vii. It is with ourselves we must first begin, and exercise our Zeal in reforming what Abuses, or unwarrantable Practices we are guilty of. Where this is not observed, our Zeal will be very unprofitable to us, and but of but little Service to another, as not being sufficiently authorized and recommended.

Nothing is more dangerous than an ignorant blind Zeal, the sad Effects of which are testified by the many Heresies and innumerable Troubles it has produced in the Church, to the Ruin of many thousand Souls. The Authors of which ever pretended 'Zeal for God's Honour, and the Purity of the Faith. Hence wilfully ignorant, refusing to be taught, and submit to the Authority of those placed over them, and appointed for their Guides, they run themselves and their seduced Followers into the Ditch of Error, and become irrecoverably lost. A right Christian Zeal is likewise to be tempered with Moderation, and not pass the Bounds of that Meekness prescribed in the Gospel. For this we need no other Rule than the Measure we desire may be observed towards ourselves. This will exclude all that Choler, Hastiness and Impatience, which are the Products of false Zeal. We have, generally speaking, but too much Sweetness and Indulgence towards

towards ourselves; let us show some of it towards our Brethren and those we desire to correct and reform. Let us all reform ourselves one by another; but let it be every one's principal Care to reform himself first, and then by all the sweet and gentle Ways of Mildness, and fraternal Charity, endeavour to reform his Neighbour.

ASPIRATIONS.

O sweet *Jesus*, whose Zeal was strong and ardent for the Glory of thy heavenly Father, and for the Salvation of Men! enlighten me by thy Grace, and fill my Heart with the same holy Fire, that I may be zealous for the Good of my own Soul, and that of my Neighbour. But let this Zeal be so regulated by true Charity, that I may never neglect myself, nor seek to reform others, with Heat and Passion, nor transgress the Rules of Humility, Obedience and Submission to those thou hast placed over me, and thus preserve the Unity of the Faith in the Bond of Peace.

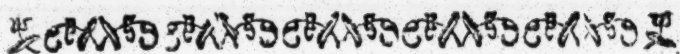
O *Jesus*, Prince of Peace, and Lover of Unity and Concord, preserve my Soul in Peace. Give me that Peace which passes all Understanding; that Peace which the World cannot give, nor take away. Give me Peace with thee, my God, in the Pardon of my Sins, and a perfect Reconciliation with thee. Peace with myself in the Quiet of a good Conscience void of Offence in thy Sight, and in the Sight

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of Man. Peace with my Neighbour, by never injuring or hurting him. Deliver me from all warm and intemperate Zeal. Let me always wish well to others, and endeavour to procure their Good by all the Ways of Charity and tender Condescension to their Weakness. May true Charity guide and direct me in all my Behaviour to others, that I may gain Souls to the Knowledge, Love and Service of thee.



TUESDAY



T U E S D A Y

In the third Week of *Lent*.

The G O S P E L, St. *Matt.* xviii. 15.

BUT if thy Brother shall offend against thee, go and reprehend him, between thee, and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou shalt gain thy Brother. 16. And if he will not hear thee, take with thee one or two more, that in the Mouth of two or three Witnesses every Word may stand good. 17. And if he will not hear them, tell the Church: And if he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the Heathen and Publican. 18. Amen, I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven: And whatsoever you shall loose upon Earth shall be loosed in Heaven. 19. Again I say to you, that if two of you agree together on Earth, concerning any Thing whatsoever they shall

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ask,

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ask, it shall be done to them by my Father who is in Heaven. 20. For where there are two or three gathered together in my Name, there am I in the Midst of them. 21. Then came *Peter* unto him, and said: Lord how often shall my Brother offend against me, and I forgive him? Till seven Times? 22. *Jesus* saith to him: I say not to thee till seven Times, but till seventy Times seven Times.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

The Gospel of Yesterday gave Occasion to speak of Zeal in general, and how it was to be managed so as to be acceptable to God, advantageous to ourselves, and profitable to others. In the Gospel of this Day, we have a particular Advice how to exercise our Zeal in Regard of one great Branch of it; to wit, fraternal Correction, which, as it is a Duty not to be omitted on proper Occasions, so it is to be regulated according to what our blessed Saviour here delivers, that it may have a good Effect. We live in an Age when there are Vices enough to correct, and no Want of those who are busy in correcting them. Every one is become a Censurer of his Brother, and the Faults of others is the common Topick of Conversation. But these Sort of Corrections do much more Harm than Good, and the Reason is, because the Advice or Correction not being given as it ought, is seldom or ever well taken. Hence, notwithstanding so much
Censure

Censure of others Faults, there follows little or no Reformation.

As this Point of correcting, or giving Advice to another, is of an exceeding nice and delicate Nature, to succeed in it, we must carefully observe those Conditions which the Nature of the Thing requires. If we fail in them, we have little Reason to hope our Advice will produce any good Effect. The Conditions necessary to be observed are, that we give our Advice piously, prudently, sweetly, and efficaciously. It must first be done piously, that is, out of a true Zeal for the Glory of God, and the Good of our Brother's Soul; out of a charitable Pity and Compassion for his better Part in Danger to be lost by Sin. There are but too many who declaim against Vice, but it is against those Vices which are particularly contrary to their own Humour and Inclination. An ambitious and extravagant Person will be very eloquent against Covetousness, and Avarice. The Miser will as severely condemn the Prodigal. There are others of a peevish, melancholy Temper, who will continually find Fault with every Thing almost in the Conduct of others, and with whom nothing is right. There are but too many whose Reproofs are the Effects of their Envy, and who censure others not so much for their Faults, as for their great and distinguished Qualities. But, how little is here of true Charity, or Zeal for the Glory of God, and the spiritual Good of our Neighbour? Whoever acts up-

on other Motives than these, is no Ways qualified to give Advice to another. To this must be added, in Order to give our Advice piously, that we be pious ourselves, and free from those Vices we correct. To succeed in our fraternal Correction, we must not only speak but act likewise; that is, we must show good Example in a pious and unblameable Life, which will give Force and Strength to what we say.

A second Condition to be observed in giving Advice, is Prudence. For if it is not given prudently and with Discretion in Regard of the Person to whom we speak, and at a proper Time, our Zeal, however truly charitable and well meant, may fail of Success. We must have Regard to the Temper and Quality of the Person to whom we give Advice, and say nothing but what is necessary to let him see the Danger and Folly of the Vice we would correct, without the least Reflection upon his Person or Parts. We must also well time our Admonitions, and speak in a proper Place, between himself and us, not in Publick, to expose him to all the World. Hence our blessed Lord says: *If thy Brother hath sinned against thee, go, and reprove him between thee and him alone*, Matt. vii. We must endeavour likewise to speak when he is in proper Dispositions to hear us. Thus to give Advice against Passion, Drunkenness and the like. Stay till his Passion is over, and when he is sober. When he is in Passion, or in Drink, he is not capable of hearing or attending to what we say,

say, which too often then is lost upon him. But when he is cool and sober, then he is able to reflect upon what we urge to shew the unreasonable Folly of these Extravagancies. And in all our Admonitions, to Prudence must be joined Sweetness, and an engaging Air of true Love and Compassion, without the least Mixture of Heat or Passion on our Parts. We must imitate the good *Samaritan*, Luke x. pour Oil and Wine into his Wounds to lenify and give him Ease; and not Vinegar and Gall to make them smart, and increase his Sores. Corrosives may, sometimes, and in some Cases, be necessary, but generally are not to be applied, but when all the Lenitives of Mildness and Sweetness prove ineffectual, and on Persons over whom we have a Right of Authority. This is admirably figured to us in holy Scripture, *Isaias xxxviii.* by the Figs which the Prophet *Isaias* applied to the Sore of King *Ezekias*; from whence we may learn, that all Admonitions ought to have nothing in them but Sweetness, and that the least sower Harshness will render them useless if not dangerous. With how much Address and Gentleness did the Prophet *Nathan* reprove King *David*! The royal Psalmist, as soon as he perceived it, condemned himself, and thereby obtained his Pardon, 2 *Reg. xii.*

This Sweetness and Mildness is no Ways incompatible with speaking efficaciously and with Authority, when necessary, especially to those under our Care, and in Subjection to us. A

moderate and becoming Warmth is sometimes necessary to make Impression upon, and move those we speak to. Our Blessed Saviour who was all Mildness and Sweetness, both spoke and acted with Authority, when he drove the Buyers and Sellers out of the Temple, *John ii.* When this becomes necessary, and is omitted, it involves us in the Guilt of the High-Priest *Hei*, who reprov'd his Sons, but because he did it in a faint and inefficacious Manner, he experienced that terrible Punishment threatened: *I have therefore sworn, says the Lord, to the House of Heli, that the Iniquity of that House shall not be expiated by Victims and Gifts for ever,* 1 Reg. iii. To confirm what has been said, may be added what God says by the Prophet *Ezekiel. The Wicked shall die in his Iniquity, but at thy Hand will I require his Blood,* Ezek. iii. That we may no Ways be concerned in this Menace, let us do all we can by Admonition and Advice, to reclaim our Brother, and by that Means contribute to his Salvation, which will contribute not a little to our own Glory and Happiness in Heaven.

A S P I R A T I O N S.

O *Jesus*, give me a Spirit of true Christian Charity, whereby I may endeavour to reclaim and gain those who err and are gone astray, by the gentle Ways of Kindness and Condescension. Let me never be so far transported by a false Zeal as to hate their Persons. My God!

I will

Tuesday in the third Week of Lent. 167

I will hate no one, but love every one as my Brother, and endeavour to gain every one to thee. Let me never be Partakers of any one's Crimes by a criminal Silence, or a Neglect of seasonable Reproofs and Admonitions, and may true Charity, and a sincere Desire of doing Good, be the Motive of all such Endeavours, that I may find Acceptance with thee.

O Spirit of Charity and divine Love, come and take full Possession of my Heart and Soul, that I may be full of Love and Charity to others. O Jesus, God of Love, infinite Source of all Goodness, thou hast said, that by loving one another we shall be known to be thy Disciples. O may I daily give this Proof that I am one of thine, by truly loving my Neighbour as myself. Let me show this Love by doing all I can to assist him in loving and serving thee. May I be always ready and willing to instruct the Ignorant; to counsel the Doubtful, and to correct Sinners with Prudence, Mildness, and a well tempered Zeal, to the Glory of thy holy Name, and to the Benefit of their and my own Soul.

W E D



W E D N E S D A Y

In the third Week of *Lent*.

The G O S P E L, St. *Matt.* xv. 1.

THEN came to him from *Jerusalem* Scribes and *Pharisees*, saying : 2. Why do thy Disciples transgress the Tradition of the Ancients ? For they wash not their Hands, when they eat Bread. 3. But he answering, said to them : Why do you also transgress the Commandment of God for your Tradition ? For God said : 4. Honour thy Father and thy Mother : And he that shall curse Father or Mother, let him die the Death. 5. But you say : Whosoever shall say to Father or Mother, the Gift whatsoever proceedeth from me, shall profit thee. 6. And he shall not honour his Father nor his Mother ; and you have made void the Commandment of God, for your Tradition.

dition. 7. Hypocrites, well hath *Isaias* prophesied of you, saying: 8. This People honoureth me with their Lips, but their Heart is far from me. 9. And in vain do they worship me, teaching Doctrines and Commandments of Men. 10. And having called the People to him, he said to them: Hear and understand. 11. Not that which goeth into the Mouth doth defile a Man, but what cometh out of the Mouth, this defileth a Man. 12. Then came his Disciples and said to him: Dost thou know that the *Pharisees* when they heard this Word, were scandalized. 13. But he answered and said: Every Plantation which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted out. 14. Let them alone, they are blind, and Leaders of the Blind; and if the Blind lead the Blind, both fall into the Pit. 15. And *Peter* answering said to him: Explain to us this Parable. 16. And he said: Are you also yet without Understanding. 17. Do you not understand that whatsoever entereth into the Mouth, goeth into the Belly, and is cast out into the Privy. 18. But the Things which proceed out of the Mouth come forth from the Heart, and those Things defile a Man. 19. For from the Heart come forth evil Thoughts, Murders, Adulteries, Fornications, Thefts, False-Witnesses, Blasphemies. 20. These are the Things that defile a Man. But to eat with unwashed Hands, doth not defile a Man.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

How grievous a Sin Hypocrisy is, and how odious in the Sight of God may easily be learnt from this Gospel, and the many severe Woes our Saviour pronounces on the Hypocritical *Scribes* and *Pharisees*. Nor is Hypocrisy less dangerous in its Consequences, than odious before God ; and the Consequences are not only terrible in Regard of the Hypocrite, but of others also, for which he will stand accountable. The Gospel of this Day gives a fair Occasion to speak of Hypocrisy in itself, and to show the Enormity of it : But I shall wave that, and chuse rather to consider the too general and bad Consequences of it in Regard of others, of those who are apt to take Offence at the Hypocrisy of some, and thereby either deny, or entertain wrong Notions of Religion ; or else raise to themselves Obstacles in the Way of Virtue, or permit themselves to be imposed upon by the false Pretences of Hypocrites. Of the first Sort are Libertines, or in the modern Dialect, Free-thinkers. Of the second are some well-meaning and good People, and of the third are the Weak and Imprudent. To obviate the Errors and Mistakes of these. The Libertine will find, upon due Consideration, that he has no Reason to quarrel with and deny Religion for the Hypocrisy of the Professors of it. The well-meaning good Christian ought not take Scandal at it, and the imprudent

prudent are no Ways excusable, by letting themselves to be surprized by the Artifices and plausible Behaviour of Hypocrites.

Ever since the first Establishment of the christian Religion, those who cared not to follow the holy Maxims of it, or to regulate their Lives by the Precepts of the Gospel, have endeavoured to cry it down, and to represent it as a pure Invention, a Piece of Priest-Craft contrived to enslave the Minds of Men, and keep them in Awe; and beholding the Behaviour of some who have endeavoured to cover their Vices with the Mask of seeming Virtue, they too hastily conclude, that Religion in itself, is no more than Artifice, and a cunning Contrivance the more easily to impose upon others. But to deny Religion because some pretend to it, and have it not, is but weak Reasoning, and no Ways consistent with that clear Judgment these Gentlemen set up for Masters of it: And we may venture to affirm the true Reason why they reject Religion in Speculation, is, because they have first cast it off in Practice. Resolving to live at their Liberty, and knowing themselves to be without Virtue, they are pleased with a Notion that those who appear virtuous, are only so, in Appearance, and because there are some Hypocrites, conclude that all who appear in Behalf of Religion are so. Thus having no Idea of true solid Piety, they would persuade themselves and others, that it is no more than a specious Phantom, an imaginary Being, not to
be

be found among Men. Or if by the Force of undeniable Conviction they grant that there are Christians of true Piety, they set themselves, and use all their Endeavours to discredit it, and expose it to Ridicule from the hypocritical Appearances of some, charging the Imperfections of these upon others, and running down sincere Truth by all the Railleries due only to Falshood and deceitful Appearances. For this End they are so nice and critical in observing the Failures of some, that none may dare to censure or condemn their Liberties. This, though it does not in Reality, at all affect true Piety, nor render it less to be admired and endeavoured for, is one sad Effect to which Hypocrites concur: And though it will no Ways excuse the Libertine, nor justify his Conduct, yet will be a great Aggravation to their Guilt, who by external Pretences to Piety and Devotion, without any Reality, give an Occasion to the Enemies of Religion to represent all the Professors of it, as so many Cheats and Impostors. But such Libertines will reap no Advantage when they come to be judged, nor by the Prejudices they have taken at others, but by their own Actions, and be condemned by the Testimony of their own Conscience.

The seeming Advantages which Libertines and Free-Thinkers draw from the pretended Piety of Hypocrites, is not the only bad Effect which Hypocrisy produces. It gives Scandal and Offence to the Virtuous, and raises many
great

great Obstacles in the Way of Virtue. Many well-meaning Christians, for Fear of being accounted Hypocrites, and to expose themselves to be ridiculed and laughed at for such, are unwilling to appear publicly, as it were, in the Cause of Virtue. They, in a great Measure, hide their Candle under a Bushel, instead of letting their Light shine before Men, *Matt. v.* The Apprehension of being made a Jest by others, and represented as a Bigot or Hypocrite, hinders them from attempting any Thing great and heroick: And though they are virtuously disposed, and have a secret Horror for any Kind of Vice, a secret Shame hinders them from speaking or acting with a Gospel Courage and Resolution. This is an unhappy Condition, and such would do well to consider, that it is fearing Man rather than God; and in Reality is as unreasonable as criminal. A Christian, whose Profession is to fear nothing but God, and to despise the World, ought not to be afraid of being censured and laughed at by the World. Will such pretend that being devout is to expose themselves to be called Hypocrites, and false Pretenders to Piety, that very Reason ought to make them have a Zeal for Religion and Piety, and to convince Libertines and others, that whatever they are pleased to say, true Piety is no Phantom; that there are those who know how to adore God in Spirit and in Truth, *John iv.* It is the Duty of every one who is a Christian to convince the Enemies of Virtue
and

and Piety, that notwithstanding all their Prejudice and Passions, it depends on themselves, and they may be virtuous if they please, since they see others in the same State and Condition, abstain from Sin, and practise true and solid Virtue. Let not any one then excuse himself, out of Fear of being ridiculed for being virtuous; to be so, is to suffer in a glorious Cause. If it is great and glorious to take Part with a suffering Friend in the World: Shall a Christian abandon the Cause of God, be ashamed of him, or to undergo some Rallery for his Sake? If we are ashamed of, and abandon Virtue now, what shall we do at the Hour of Death, when the World, all Creatures, and even God shall abandon us? We shall then see our Folly, but, alas! it will be then too late to retrieve it.

A third ill Effect of Hypocrisy is, that thereby the Weak and Imprudent are often imposed upon by the false Pretences of Hypocrites. This has caused those sad Disorders and Divisions in the Church of God; and Heresy never more prevailed than when it put on the Mask of seeming Piety, affecting a sanctified Exterior, and condemning the smallest Relaxation from antient Discipline; preaching up Mortification and the strictest Morals, and with the single Word of Reformation, and a specious Pretext to it, drawing after it many simple and unwary Souls, who are deceived by these false Appearances. These are the bad Effects of Hypocrisy; and if, as our Saviour says, *Matt.*
vii.

vii. we may know the Tree by its Fruits, we may easily discover what a bad Tree it is; how much it concerns us to preserve ourselves from this Vice, and to be upon our Guard not to be surprized or imposed on by Hypocrites, or give Reason to suspect we are Hypocrites ourselves.

A S P I R A T I O N S.

O God of Sincerity and Truth, to whom the Secrets of all Hearts are known, preserve me by thy Grace from this odious Vice, or being affected by the ill Consequences of it. Let me acknowledge the Truth of that holy Religion thou hast revealed; and with Courage and Sincerity practice the Duties of it. Let no Fear or Shame, nor any worldly Motives prevail upon me, or make me afraid to own what I call myself, thy Servant. Give me an ardent and heroic Zeal for the Glory of thy Name, and the Salvation of Souls. Let Libertines and Sinners laugh at, and deride me, I will esteem it my Happiness, and count it more glorious thus to suffer for thee, than to be Master of all the World can give. *O Jesus*, thou art my Master, and I am thy Disciple. Thou art my Lord, and I am thy Servant; and I will count it the highest Honour to be treated as thou wert. With thy holy Apostle I will say: *God forbid that I should glory but in the Cross of Christ*, Gal. vi.

Yes,

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Yes, my adorable Saviour, I am content to suffer all Reproaches, while I endeavour to love and serve thee with Zeal and Fervour. Give me Grace to do this with a sincere and upright Heart; with Purity of Intention, void of all human Respects, Dissimulation and Hypocrisy. O thou to whom the Secrets of all Hearts are open, and from whom nothing is hid! let me not deceive myself by empty Shows and outward Professions only. May a sincere Desire to please thee only be the moving Principle of all my Actions. May I love thee alone and above all other Things; and with a steady firm Resolution, and with constant Endeavours daily tend towards thee, till I come finally to enjoy thee, and be eternally happy in the Enjoyment of thee.



THURSDAY



T H U R S D A Y

In the third Week of *Lent*.

The G O S P E L, St. *Luke* iv. 38.

AND *Jesus* rising up out of the Synagogue, entered into the House of *Simon*. And the Mother of *Simon's* Wife was seized with a great Fever ; and they besought him for her. 39. And standing over her he commanded the Fever, and it left her. And immediately rising up she ministred to them. 40. And when the Sun was set, all they that had any sick with divers Diseases, brought them to him. And he laying his Hands on every one of them, healed them. 41. And the Devils went out from many, crying out, and saying : Thou art the Son of God : and rebuking them he suffered them not to speak, for they knew that he
was

was Christ. 42. And when it was Day, going out, he went into a Desert Place, and the Multitude sought him, and came unto him: And they staid him that he should not depart from them. 43. To whom he said: I must also preach the Kingdom of God to other Cities; for therefore am I sent. 44. And he was preaching in the Synagogues of *Galilee*.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

Sickness, if considered in itself, as it affects the Body, afflicting it by Pain, and hindering us from following our necessary Concerns, or enjoying the Pleasures of Life, is a very great Misfortune, and, with good Reason, every one afflicted with it, endeavours to be freed from it as soon as they can. But if it be considered with Regard to the Soul, and in the Order of Grace, it will appear advantageous, and from which no small Benefit may be reaped. The Gospel of this Day relates, that *St. Peter's* Mother-in-Law was sick of a Fever, and from the Circumstances of her Sickness and Cure, we may learn those Instructions, which, if followed, will turn all our Sickness to our Advantage. This sick Woman was confined to her Bed. *St. Peter*, and the other Disciples applied to Jesus Christ, and intreated him, that he would cure her. Being cured, she rose up and ministered to her Divine Benefactor. These are the Circumstances; and the in-

instructive Lessons we may learn from them, are, 1. That God makes use of corporal Sick-ness oftentimes as a Means to hinder us from and preserve us from the Temptations to which an uninterrupted State of Health exposes us. 2. That in Time of Sick-ness we should have Recourse to Jesus Christ, as to our chief Physician. 3. That when by his Mercy he has restored us to Health, we make a right Use of the Blessing, by consecrating our Health to the Service of God.

That the World is full of Dangers, to which we are daily exposed, and into which we almost as daily fall, is a Truth too clear to be called into Question, and is but too evidently demonstrated by sad Experience. As an Antidote against an Infection so general in the World, God is pleased sometimes by Sick-ness to confine us to our Beds; to draw us from the dangerous Occasions of Sin, and thereby to give us Time and Leisure to consider the World in a true Light, what it is; and making a Virtue of Necessity, to improve that Leisure by serious Reflections. Confined to our Beds by Sick-ness, or to our Room by an ill State of Health, the Mind is free and at Large. The Objects which before so powerfully attracted their Attention, have no longer any Force. For, what are Riches to a Person who has no Health to enjoy them? What are Honours to him who is not in a Condition to make Use of them; and who sees Death at Hand ready to lay him in the Grave, and to
con-

confound him with the lowest and most despicable of Men? What, alas! are Pleasures to a sick Man? The very Remembrance of them are a Trouble to him; and all his Thoughts are employed how he may avoid, for the future, what he finds has been so prejudicial to his Health.

Holy *Job* with great Reason styles the Life of Man a Warfare upon Earth, *Job. vii.* And we find ourselves continually exposed to the Assaults of cruel and powerful Enemies, the World, the Flesh and the Devil, who never cease molesting and persecuting us. The Time of Sicknes may be said to be a Kind of Retreat we make to avoid their Fury, to breathe, as it were, and to rally our scattered Forces, that we may resist them with greater Vigour. Such Retreats are oftentimes the Cause of a glorious Victory. It is like retiring into a strong Town well fortified, where we are secure from the Attempts of our Enemies, at Leisure to consider our Condition, and take these necessary Precautions, as may make us in future Combats victorious. This is the Advantage we may reap by Sicknes, and it will be our own Fault if we do not; in Time of which we are taught by the Gospel of this Day, to have Recourse principally to Jesus Christ as to our chief Physician and Helper.

When God sends us a Fit of Sicknes, or afflicts us with a bad State of Health, he does not forbid us to have Recourse to a Physician, or to use lawful Means to recover, or restore
our

our lost Health; but in the first Place, we are to have Recourse to him, by acknowledging our Illness to be the Effect of his permissive Will, and from him expect a Blessing upon the Remedies we make Use of, for without him, the ablest Physician can do us no good, nor all the Drugs in the World restore us to Health. He can, and will do it, if he sees it expedient for us. In vain we have Recourse, with so much Solitude and Anxiety to temporal Physicians, who by endeavouring to cure, run oftentimes a Hazard of doing us more Harm than Good. God who is the Physician of our Souls as well as our Bodies, knows what is expedient and profitable for both. A bodily Sickness oftentimes contributes to the Health of the Soul, and therefore we are no further to desire our Recovery than as it may be for his Glory, and our spiritual Good. In all Sickness let us imitate St. Peter's Mother-in-Law, who for her Recovery had Recourse to Jesus Christ, *Matt. vii.* And the Centurion who addressed himself to our Saviour, in Behalf of his sick Servant. To this must be added Patience and Resignation, not only as to our Recovery, but also to the Time of it, and to all the Pain and Trouble attending Sickness. A fretful uneasy Temper, Murmurs and Complaints, contribute nothing to our Cure, and oftentimes hinder and retard it: They deprive us of, or at least diminish the Merit of our Suffering, and render others less willing and able to assist

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us. We must therefore, in Time of Sickness, guard ourselves against Fretfulness and Impatience, and beg of God to assist our weak Nature by his Grace, that all our Sufferings may be sanctified to his Glory and our Good; and that if he shall please to restore our Health, we may make a right Use of it, by consecrating our Health to his Service.

This is the third Instruction we are taught from this Day's Gospel. St. Peter's Mother-in-Law being cured by our Saviour, immediately rose up, and ministred to him. By this we are taught what Use we ought to make of our Health when restored to us. Those who are dangerously sick are generally liberal in their Promises of Amendment, and to serve God as they ought, if he will please to restore them to their Health. But it too often happens, that after a Recovery these Promises are no more thought of. This is a horrible Ingratitude deserving the severest Punishment. If then God hears our Prayers, and raises us up from a Bed of Sickness, let us keep the Promises we made, and with a new State of Health, serve him with new and greater Fidelity: And then our Sickness will prove not unto Death, but unto Life both here and hereafter.

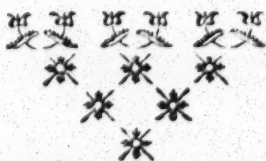
ASPIRATIONS.

O *Jefus*, how ought I to be covered with Shame and Confusion, when I reflect upon my past Ingratitude? How often have I had Recourse to thee, and thou haft mercifully granted the Favour I asked; but, alas! I have not rifen up and waited upon thee. Pardon, dear Lord, this unworthy Behaviour, and make me more faithful to my Duty hereafter. Whenever thou fhalt please to vifit me with thy fatherly Corrections, may I patiently submit to thy holy Will and Pleasure, and place all my Hope and Confidence in thee alone, and in all Things defire nothing but that thy Holy Will be done.

May I never more be ungrateful to thy Bounty, O my God! May the daily Experience I have of thy Goodnefs fill my Heart with the warmeft Sentiments of Gratitude and Acknowledgment. In all the Dispensations of thy Providence. In all that thou permitteft to happen to me, may I fee and adore thy merciful Designs for my greater Good. If I am fick, I will bow down and adore thy fovereign Will. I will patiently bear all Sicknefs and Pain, as thy fatherly Chafifements for my Offences. I will adore thee punifhing me here, in Order, I hope, to fpare me hereafter.

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When thou shalt restore me to Health again,
that Health I will consecrate to and employ in
thy Service. Confirm me, by thy Grace in
my good Purposes, and may I never more be
unfaithful to thee.



FRIDAY



F R I D A Y

In the third Week of *Lent*.

The GOSPEL, St. *John* xiv. 5.

AT that Time *Jesus* came to a City of *Samaria*, which is called *Sichar*, near the Land, which *Jacob* gave to his Son *Joseph*. 6. Now *Jacob's* Well was there. *Jesus* therefore being wearied with his Journey, sat by the Well. It was about the sixth Hour. 7. There cometh a Woman of *Samaria* to draw Water. *Jesus* saith to her: Give me to drink. 8. For his Disciples were gone into the City to buy Meat. 9. Then that *Samaritan* Woman saith to him: How dost thou, being a *Jew*, ask of me to drink, who am a *Samaritan* Woman? For the *Jews* do not communicate with the *Samaritans*. 10. *Jesus* answered,

and said to her : If thou didst know the Gift of God, and who is he that saith to thee ; give me to drink : Thou perhaps wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living Water. 11. The Woman saith to him : Sir, thou hast nothing wherein to draw, and the Well is deep ; from whence then hast thou living Water ? 12. Art thou greater than our Father *Jacob*, who gave us the Well ? And drank thereof, and his Children, and his Cattle. 13. *Jesus* replied, and said to her : Whosoever drinketh of this Water, shall thirst again ; but he that shall drink of the Water which I shall give him, shall not thirst for ever. 14. But the Water that I shall give him, shall become in him a Fountain of Water springing up unto Life everlasting. 15. The Woman saith to him : Sir, give me this Water, that I may not thirst, nor come hither to draw Water. 16. *Jesus* saith to her : Go, call thy Husband, and come hither. 17. The Woman answered, and said : I have no Husband. *Jesus* said to her : thou hast said well, I have no Husband. 18. For thou hast had five Husbands, and he whom now thou hast, is not thy Husband : This thou hast said truly. 19. The Woman saith to him : Sir, I perceive thou art a Prophet. 20. Our Fathers adored on this Mountain, and you say, that at *Jerusalem* is the Place where Men must adore. 21. *Jesus* saith to her : Woman believe me, the Hour is coming, when neither on this Mountain, nor in *Jerusalem* shall you
adore

adore the Father. 22. You adore that which you know not: We adore that which we know, for Salvation is of the *Jews*. 23. But the Hour cometh, and now is, when the true Adorers shall adore the Father in Spirit and Truth: For the Father also seeketh such to adore him. 24. God is a Spirit; and they that adore him, must adore him in Spirit and in Truth. 25. The Woman saith to him: I know that the Messias cometh (who is called Christ) when therefore he is come, he will tell us all Things. 26. *Jesus* saith to her: I am he, who am speaking with thee. 27. And immediately his Disciples came: And they wondered that he talked with the Woman: Yet no Man said: What askest thou, or why dost thou talk with her? 28. The Woman therefore left her Water-pot and went her Way into the City, and saith to the Men there: 29. Come, and see a Man, who hath told me all Things whatsoever I have done. Is not he the Christ? 30. They went therefore out of the City, and came unto him. 31. In the mean Time, the Disciples prayed him, saying: Rabbi, eat. 32. But he saith to them: I have Meat to eat, which you know not. 33. The Disciples said therefore one to another: Hath any one brought him to eat? 34. *Jesus* saith to them: My Meat is, to do the Will of him that sent me, that I perfect his Work. 35. Do not you say, there are yet four Months, and then the Harvest cometh: Behold I say to you, lift up
I 4 your

your Eyes, and see the Countries, for they are white already for the Harvest. 36. And he that reapeth, receiveth his Hire, and gathereth Fruit unto Life everlasting, that he that soweth, and he who reapeth, may rejoice together. 37. For in this is the Saying true: That one soweth, and another reapeth. 38. I have sent you to reap, in which you did not labour; others have laboured, and you have entered into their Labours. 39. Now of that City many of the *Samaritans* believed in him, for the Word of the Woman bearing Testimony: That he told me all Things whatsoever I have done. 40. So when the *Samaritans* were come to him, they desired that he would tarry there. And he abode there two Days. 41. And many more believed in him because of his own Words. 42. And they said to the Woman: Now we believe not for thy Saying; for we ourselves have heard him and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the World.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

The Miracles of Nature, which our blessed Saviour wrought by curing the Sick and the Lame; by restoring Sight to the Blind, and raising those to Life who were dead, are truly great and surprising. Nor are the Miracles of his Grace and Mercy shown in the Conversion
of

of Sinners, less wonderful, or less to be admired, and sufficiently prove the sincere and ardent Desire he had, that all should be saved, and that no one should perish. But never did this Mercy of the Son of God shine brighter, or appear with greater Lustre, than in the Conversion of the *Samaritan Woman*, as related in the Gospel of this Day. He refuses not the Conversation of a Woman infamous for a publick, scandalous Commerce, and as well by the engaging Sweetness of his Behaviour, as by his telling her all she had done, wrought in her a sincere Conversion.

There is this Difference to be observed between the Miracles of Nature, wrought by the Power of God, and the Miracles of Grace. The first are the sole Effects of his Power alone, without any Concurrence on our Part. The second are the Effects of his Goodness, but which require the Co-operation of our Wills. God is, indeed, the principal Agent, who gives us Grace, to which Man, in the second Place, co-operates by his Will. This will evidently appear from some practical Remarks we may make upon this Day's Holy Gospel.

Our Blessed Lord desired the Conversion of the *Samaritan Woman*, and for that Reason he first went and sat down by the Well, where he knew she would come to draw Water. Secondly, he gave her a Knowledge of the sad State she was in; and Thirdly, from thence, inspired her with a sincere Desire of being con-

verted. The same he does in Regard of all Sinners. He searches after them; he calls upon them in Publick, and speaks to them in Private. He calls upon them publickly, by the Ministers of his Word; he speaks to them in Private by the Checks of their own Conscience, and the sweet Inspirations of his holy Spirit. He searches after them in all those favourable Occasions he gives them of being converted, and by that Patience with which he waits for their Return, he lets them see the sad State they are in, setting before them the Enormity of their Crimes, the Punishments due to them, and the absolute Necessity of Repentance to avoid being eternally lost. This strikes them with a holy Fear and Dread, and puts them upon seeking how to be saved. Hence they conceive a Horror of their past Sins, and being more enlightened, and receiving greater Degrees of Grace, they detest their Sins, not only as prejudicial to them, but as odious in themselves, offensive to God, and displeasing to him. Thus they return to God by a sincere Conversion, and by an entire Change of Life and Manners, from the Slavery of Sin, we behold them restored to the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God. This is the Effect of the Grace of God thus searching after poor lost Sinners, and by which he draws them from the sad State they are in.

To this it is necessary that Sinners co-operate by the Concurrence of their Will, and right Use of this Mercy and Goodness of God, who, though he made us without ourselves, without any Concurrence on our Part, yet will not save us without ourselves, without we join the Consent of our Will and sincere Endeavours. A Sinner then that would be saved, must first humbly confess and be sorry for his Sins. He must secondly leave off Sinning, and fly from all Occasions of Sin; and thirdly, persevere in a constant Practice of Virtue and Piety. This we may observe in the Conduct of the *Samaritan Woman*, and unless Sinners imitate her, in vain they flatter themselves with Hopes of Salvation. To confess and be sorry for our Sins, in Order to obtain Pardon, is but just and reasonable, if we are desired by any one, who has offended us, to pardon and forgive him, we expect that he should acknowledge his Fault and be sorry for it. Can we then expect that God should pardon our Sins, unless we are sorry for, and acknowledge them? Can we be said to be sorry for them unless we purpose never wilfully to sin again? Or can such Purposes be thought sincere, if we do not refrain from, and fly the Occasions of Sin? Alas! to a true Conversion something more is required, than barely confessing, and saying, I am sorry for having offended God. We must prove that Sorrow to be sincere, and our Conversion real, by a Change of our Lives and Manners. We must no more admire the
World,

World, nor be governed by its Maxims. We must no longer follow the Methods of Pride and Vanity, nor be Slaves to our criminal Passions. We must crucify the Flesh, and the Concupiscences thereof; and govern ourselves by the Rules of that Gospel we profess, living not to the World but to God, that we may be able to say with the Apostle: *I live, but now not I, but Christ lives in me*, Gal. ii. This will shew a happy Change, and by Constancy and Perseverance therein, we shall answer the merciful Ends for which God bestows his Graces upon us, and entitle ourselves to the promised Reward.

This will be necessary to observe, as a Security against Relapses, which are extremely dangerous, and carry with them no small Load of Ingratitude to God, for the Mercies shown to us, make us run no small Hazard of his drawing his Grace from us, and to leave us to ourselves. The Sense of the Danger we were in, and the sad State of Sin, should make us extremely careful and watchful over ourselves, and not so easily as we too often do, yield to the Temptations of our Enemy. A Man who values his Health, after having recovered a violent and dangerous Sickness, will not easily be persuaded to do that which will certainly sling him into the same Illness again, and make his Recovery more difficult. And shall one who values his Soul, after having recovered the Health of it, by the Grace of God, and a Conversion, wilfully relapse again,
and

and run the Hazard of losing it once more? The Conduct of such a one deserves not only the severest Censure, but also the severest Punishment. Let us not then receive the Grace of God in vain, but by a due and faithful co-operating with it, secure ourselves the Favour of him here, and by Perseverance therein, our own Happiness hereafter.

A S P I R A T I O N S.

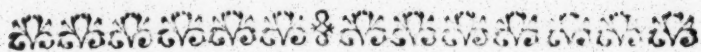
O *Jesus*, my most merciful Saviour and Redeemer! How often hast thou called upon me; and how long hast thou waited for my returning to thee? Let not this thy Bounty be in vain, dear Lord, to me. I desire, O my God, by a sincere Repentance and Conversion, to return to thee, and leave those sinful Ways wherein I have so long wandered from thee, my true and only Life. This Desire is the Effect of thy Grace, and do thou graciously perfect what thou hast begun. Give me, O my God, an utter Abhorrence of my past Sins; may I fly from all Occasions of sinning for the future, and make it my daily Care to love thee more and more, and to persevere in thy holy Service. I acknowledge my infinite Obligations to thee, for the Mercy thou hast shown me, and I purpose to make the best Return I am able. I choose to die, rather than to offend thee any more by Sin: And, O may I cease to be at all, when I cease to be all thine; or to love any Thing more than thee.

And

And what is there, O my God! what is there that I can think worthy of my Love but thee, O thou endless, bottomless Source of all Good? Where shall I find Happiness but in loving and serving thee? Wretched and miserable as I am to seek for Happiness in sinful Pleasures, and thereby offend thee. O Fountain of living Waters! flow upon my Heart; cleanse, purify, and wash away all base and worldly Affections. May I daily thirst after thee only, and quench this Thirst in the Life-giving Stream of thy Love.



SATURDAY



S A T U R D A Y

In the third Week of *Lent*.

The G O S P E L, St. *John* viii. 1.

AND *Jesus* went unto Mount *Olivet*. 2.
And early in the Morning he came again
into the Temple, and all the People came to
him, and sitting down he taught them. 3.
And the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* bring unto him
a Woman taken in Adultery: And they set
her in the Midst. 4. And said to him: Ma-
ster, this Woman was even now taken in Adul-
tery. 5. Now the Law of *Moses* commands
us to stone such a one; but what sayest thou?
6. And this they said tempting him, that they
might accuse him; but *Jesus* bowing himself
down, wrote with his Finger on the Ground.
7. When therefore they continued asking him,
he

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he raised himself up, and said to them: He that is without Sin among you, let him first cast a Stone at her. 8. And again stooping down, he wrote on the Ground. 9. But they hearing this went out one by one, beginning from the eldest; and *Jesus* alone remained, and the Woman standing in the Midst. 10. *Jesus* then raising himself up, said to her: Woman, where are they that accused thee? Hath no Man condemned thee? 11. Who said: No Man, Lord. And *Jesus* said: Neither will I condemn thee: Go, and now sin no more.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

Strange was the Obstinacy and Malice of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*! Notwithstanding the many undeniable and beneficial Miracles our Blessed Saviour wrought; notwithstanding his divine and heavenly Doctrines, his innocent Life, and irreproachable Conduct, they refused to own and believe in him, and sought all Occasions to persecute and revile him; to speak evil of him, and traduce him as a Seducer of the People, and a Violater of the Law of *Moses*. Desirous to have some specious Pretext to proceed against him, they bring to him a Woman taken in Adultery; they tell him the Law required, that she should be stoned to Death; but desired to know what he thought
should

should be done to her. The Son of God perceived their Hypocrisy, and understood their wicked Designs, and put them to Confusion by bidding him, who among them, was without Sin, cast the first Stone at her. They could not bear the Reproach, or stand against the Accusation of their own Consciences, but went out of the Temple, and left the Woman alone with our Saviour, who bid her go, in Peace, and sin no more. Our Blessed Lord in refusing to condemn this Woman, did not in the least justify her Crime, or declare her guiltless. He reprov'd the *Pharisees* for their Malice and Hypocrisy, and by his Goodness wrought a Conversion on the poor Woman.

Besides the malicious Intent of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* to ensnare our Saviour, by the Question they propos'd to him, the Conduct of those pretended Zealots shew'd them to be void of all Pity and Compassion for the unfortunate Offender. They expos'd her in the Temple, and publickly declared her Crime, which though it deserved the Sentence pronounced by God in the Law, against such, yet their own Guilt made them very unfit, and no ways qualified to be her Accusers. Zeal to suppress Vice and Immorality, and to punish publick and scandalous Offenders, is not only highly laudable, but a Duty incumbent on those to whom it belongs to see the Laws put in Execution. But then all such ought themselves to be so innocent, as not to give any Cause of Suspicion that they are
guilty

guilty of the Vices they prosecute in the Persons of others. A Drunkard, a Swearer, or one who frequents forbidden Places, is a very improper Person, to correct or punish others for those Crimes, or to accuse any one of them.

We may further learn from the Answer of Christ to the *Pharisees*, in this Day's Gospel, to be as favourable as we can, and as far as is consistent with Justice and Truth, to our Neighbour. If Zeal prompts us to correct, or seek his Correction, Charity must govern and direct that Zeal. This Charity will teach us to cover his Failings, as much as we can, and not to publish them to all the World. If they are of themselves publick, and too notorious to be concealed, yet the Spirit of Charity, and to do as we would be done by, will make us lessen and extenuate them as far as they will bear. Since we know not how far Chance, Inadvertency, sudden Surprize, and Weakness may have been the Occasion of this Fall. Even publick and notorious Sinners ought not to be made worse than they are, nor publickly exposed, till Duty to the Public calls for a just and public Animadversion which must be always accompanied with Pity and Compassion for the Person of the Offender. *He that is without Sin among you, let him first cast a Stone at her*, John viii. said the meek and merciful *Jesus*, to the pretendedly zealous *Pharisees*. When we are innocent

nocent ourselves of a Crime we see another guilty of, we may then exercise our Charity in reprehending him, and our charitable Reproofs and Corrections may be successful: But if we are equally guilty, with what Face, can we reprove, judge and condemn another? He will have too much Reason to reply to all we say, *Physician cure thyself*, Luke ii. *Thou who teachest another, teachest not thyself: who preachest not to steal, and stealest: who sayest Men must not commit Adultery, yet committest it*, Rom. ii. There is little Good to be expected from the Reprehensions, or Admonitions of such. The Judgments they pass upon others, are but so many just Condemnations of themselves, and involves them in the Guilt and Punishment of the *Pharisees*, who, upon our Saviour's Reply, went out of the Temple, one by one, and left the Woman with Christ and his Disciples, who would not condemn her, but bid her go, and sin no more. This Goodness and Mercy had a happy Effect according to the Opinion of the Holy Fathers and Commentators, that the Woman was thereby sincerely converted. A like Condescension may produce a like Effect; and a seasonable Mercy has often reclaimed those, whom Rigour and Severity could never work upon.

Another useful Instruction to be drawn from this Gospel, is, that however grievously we may behold others fall into Sin, we must not,
for

for that contemn or despise them ; and be vain, or proud of ourselves. Such Persons challenge our Pity and our Prayers, and are an instructive Caution to us, to take Care of ourselves, that we do not fall worse, or be guilty of greater Crimes : if we are not, it is not owing to ourselves, or to our own Strength, but to the Grace of God, which preserves us : And which same Grace can easily raise them up from their Fall, and of great Sinners, make them greater Saints, like Saint *Mary Magdalen*. On the other Hand, those who now seem to bid fair for that Character, by Pride, and trusting to themselves, may alas ! become great Sinners. *Julas* was an Apostle, and yet became an Apostate, and betrayed his Master. We are none of us secure, and the Moment we think so, and trust to ourselves, we are then falling. Our only Security is the Grace of God. To that only we must trust. That we must daily beg, and say, *lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil*, Matt. vi. This Grace we must carefully improve, and faithfully co-operate with, that by good Works we may make our Calling and Election sure, *Pet. i.*



A S P I R A T I O N S.

O *Jesus*, compassionate Saviour of Sinners, thou wouldst not condemn the Woman taken in Adultery, but didst bid her go away, and sin no more. Have the same Mercy and Compassion for me. Do not condemn me, dear Lord, though I am a grievous Sinner. May thy Grace work a thorough Change in my Heart, and may I never more offend thee. While I thus implore thy Mercy and Clemency for myself, let me be merciful to my Neighbour. Give me a tender Pity and Compassion for him, that I may always judge and speak the most charitably of him. Give me a sincere and compassionate Zeal for the Good of his Soul, that I may endeavour to reclaim him from the Ways of Sin, by Tenderness to his Person, and Pity for his Weakness. Give me O Lord, an humble Diffidence of myself, that I may never trust to myself, but place all my Confidence in thee. May thy Grace preserve me from falling; and when through Weakness, I do fall, do thou mercifully raise me up again, and may I walk more carefully afterwards.

Alas! my God, of myself I am nothing but Misery and Weakness, daily falling and relapsing into those Follies I so often repent and accuse myself of. Have Pity on me, O merciful

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ciful Saviour of the World, thou only and true Physician of my sick and wounded Soul ! speak but the Word, Lord, and I shall be healed. Say to me : Go in Peace ; and, O may I never sin any more, nor again wilfully offend thee. Thou mayest, O Lord, justly condemn me, but spare me, and let thy powerful Grace preserve me from all Occasions of Sin for the future ; that thou mayest be glorified in thy Mercy, and that I may live only in thee, and to love and serve thee. Amen, sweet Jesus, Amen.



FOURTH



FOURTH SUNDAY in LENT.

The GOSPEL, St. *John*, vi. 1.

AFTER these Things *Jesus* went over the Sea of *Galilee*, which is that of *Tiberias*. 2. And a great Multitude followed him, because they saw the Miracles, which he did upon those which were diseased. 3. *Jesus* therefore went up to a Mountain, and there he sat with his Disciples. 4. Now the Pasche, the Feast-Day of the *Jews* was at Hand. 5. When *Jesus* then had lifted up his Eyes, and saw that a very great Multitude cometh to him, he said to *Philip*, whence shall we buy Bread, that these may eat? 6. And this he said to try him, for he himself knew what he would do. 7. *Philip* answered him: Two hundred Pennyworth of Bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little

little. 8. One of his Disciples, *Andrew*, the Brother of *Simon Peter*, saith to him: 9. There is a Lad here that hath five Barley Loaves, and two Fishes, but what are these among so many? 10. Jesus then said: Make the Men sit down. Now there was much Grass in the Place: The Men therefore sat down, in Number about five thousand. 11. Jesus took the Loaves, and when he had given Thanks, he distributed to them that were set down; in like Manner also of the Fishes as much as they would. 12. And when they were filled, he said to his Disciples: Gather up the Fragments that remain, lest they be lost. 13. They gathered up therefore, and filled twelve Baskets with the Fragments of five Barley Loaves which had remained over and above to them that had eaten. 14. Those Men then, when they had seen what a Miracle Jesus had done, said: This is of a Truth the Prophet that is to come into the World. 15. Jesus therefore, when he knew that they would come to take him by Force, and make him King, he fled again into the Mountain himself alone.

REFLECTIONS.

The Miracles of our Saviour are no less instructive than surprizing; while we admire them, we may behold what affords most useful Instructions. Such is the Miracle recorded in this Day's Holy Gospel. Considering the
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tender Compassion Jesus Christ showed for the Multitude who followed him, and his generous Bounty in supplying their Necessities, we may see a wonderful Effect of his Providence over his Creatures, and from thence learn not only to believe and adore the Providence of God, but also to put our Trust and Confidence in him. If we admire the Miracle which the Son of God worked in feeding five thousand Men with five Barley Loaves, and two Fishes we have no less Reason to admire and adore his Power and Goodness, who daily feeds and maintains the Universe. His Providence not only extends to all created Nature in general, but to every Part of it in particular. Every individual Person is the Object of his Care, and which he displays in every, even the minutest, Circumstance of Life.

God, whose Essence is to be good, and who, by an Effect of his Goodness, has created us, does by the same Love and Goodness, never cease to inspect and take Care of us, as we stand daily in Need of his Assistance and Protection. Should he abandon us, though but for a Moment, we should in that Moment drop into our original Nothing; therefore it is that his vigilant Eye is always over us, continually watchful for our Preservation. Nor can this be doubted, if we consider how his Providence shows itself towards all other Creatures, even the most inconsiderable Part of the Creation. The Grass and Flowers of the Field grow by the Orders of his Providence.

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He has adorned the Lillies of the Valley with greater natural Glory than *Solomon* ever had in all his Splendor and Magnificence, *Matt. vi.* The Birds of the Air all are fed and maintained by him, and not a Sparrow falls to the Ground without his Permission. Man therefore, made after the Image and Likeness of God, cannot be supposed to be abandoned by him. If his Providence is so great in Respect of the most inconsiderable Things, sure we cannot imagine it less in Regard of Man, the most noble of created Beings in this World, and for whose Use and Service all other Things were made? This Consideration alone is sufficient to make us acknowledge and rely upon the Providence of God: And it must be a strange Ingratitude in Man, that he alone of all Creatures should question the Goodness of his Creator.

This Care which God thus takes of us, and to preserve us in that Being he has given us, is an abundant and sufficient Reason to place our Trust and Confidence in him. Let us then place all our Hopes in him, who neither can nor will deceive us. Whatever else we trust to, whether Friends, Riches, or any Thing in this World, they are at best but weak and uncertain Helps, and oftentimes deceive us when we most rely upon them, or have greatest Need of their Assistance.

But

But if God, as infinitely Good, has thus Care of us, and for which Reason we are to rely upon him. As infinitely wise, he has, in our Regard, great Secrets, which we are humbly to revere and adore; particularly in Time of Persecution, Poverty, or Sicknefs. It is one of the greatest Secrets of his wise Providence, which we are not curiously to enquire into, or, with Presumption condemn, that oftentimes Persons the most innocent and just, of the greatest Merit and Desert, are abandoned to the most violent and unjust Usage of wicked Men. This adorable Secret of Providence consists in bringing about the great Designs he has in Regard of such, and that, by Means seemingly the most contrary and opposite. Of this the Patriarch *Joseph* is an illustrious Example. His envious Brethren sold him into *Egypt*, Gen. xxxix. There he remained a Slave for some Years, and, upon the false Accusation of his Mistress, was flung into Prison among the most criminal Malefactors. If we behold him in this sad State, unable to help himself, or prove his Innocence, what small Appearance of his arriving to the highest Honour and Dignity? Nevertheless, his Slavery and Prison were the Steps by which he ascended up to the second Degree in *Egypt*, and the Grandeur of that elevated Station. It is the same in Regard of Poverty and Sicknefs. God has great and wise Designs in permitting us to labour under the Hardships of Want and Indigence; or to be troubled with

a long and painful Infirmary. We must not ask of God a Reason why we are poor, or why we are sick. It ought to suffice us that such is the Will of God. Such are the Dispensations of his Providence. He has called the Poor blessed, and designed for them eternal Riches. Though poor in this World, if we come to be rich in the other, we shall have no Reason to complain of our Lot. In all our Troubles and Misfortunes, whatever Afflictions we labour under, God will be our Support and our Recompence. If we trust in him, he will either deliver us from our Sufferings, or enable us to bear them. He will also be our Recompence, if we suffer with Patience and Constancy, in Submission to his adorable Will.

Nor is the Power of God less conspicuous in his Dispensations, than his Goodness and Wisdom. And that Power is shewn in the great Designs he has upon us. He himself is a self-existent independent Being, and the sovereign Lord of all Creatures. We, on the contrary, are dependent Creatures, not only on him, but on one another, and stand in Need of one another's mutual Help and Assistance. And the Design of God in making us so, is, that we should help and assist one another; and by that means contribute to the well being of that great Body, whereof every one is a Member. To this tends that wise Disposition of different States. Some poor, some rich, some high, and some low, all standing in Need
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of one another. Some being in Authority, and to command; others in a State of Subjection, and to obey, is what keeps the whole World in Order, and prevents that Anarchy and Confusion, which would be the necessary Consequence of all being equal. The Poor stand in Need of the Rich, to employ, help and assist them. And the Rich want the Poor to work and labour for them. And while there is this mutual Dependance on each other, no one is to envy another, scorn or despise another. The Poor must not envy the Rich; nor the Rich despise the Poor. Those who are rich must imitate their divine Master, and say: *Miserere super turbam. I have Compassion on the Multitude*, Mark viii. and consequently relieve them in their Necessities, and be the Instruments of that Providence who has Care of the Poor, as well as of the Rich. Thus shall we answer the Designs of God, and comply with the Obligations we lie under. In a Word, as we believe a Providence, let us rely upon him, and put our whole Trust in him, and not in the Things of this World. Let us adore his Secrets and submit to his Conduct. Let us concur, as we ought, to his Designs upon Earth, that we may meet with the promised Recompence in Heaven.

A S P I R A T I O N S.

O thou great Creator, and Preserver of all Things! How wonderful art thou in the Dispensations of thy Providence! I bow down and adore, and with all possible Submission resign myself up to thee in all Circumstances and Occurrences of Life. I reject all superfluous Care, and undue Solitude for the Things of this World. I know thou wilt not abandon those who trust in thee. Thou hast engaged thy Word to supply our Necessities, and to give us what is needful and necessary: Nor can I have a greater or better Security than thy Promise, which shall never fail. I will, then, altogether rely upon thee: I will adore thee in all thy Secrets, and submit to thy Conduct: I will endeavour what I can to concur to all thy Designs upon me. O may I never have any other Rule of my Actions, than thy holy Will. May all my Happiness be placed therein, and may all my Wishes and Desires ever terminate in, not as I will, but as thou wilt. Thy holy Will be done.

How bountiful art thou, Divine Jesus! how admirable is thy Goodness to those who love thee! Ah, dearest Lord! what is there in all the World that can compare to thee? How distasteful are all Things here below to a Soul who hopes for thee? Thy Mercies are infinite, and thy Goodness knows no Bounds.

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Let me not then love any Thing but thee, nor set my Affections upon the Things of this World, which are so poor and mean, and so unable to render me happy and content. In vain I seek for Happiness out of thee, or to fill the Desires of my Heart, which was created for thee. All Things are empty Nothings without thee: Thou only art the worthy Object of my Love, nor will I desire any Thing but thee, O sweetest Jesus! my God, and my All.





M O N D A Y

In the fourth Week of *Lent*.

The G O S P E L, St. *Joha* ii. 13.

AND the Pasche of the *Jews* was at Hand:
 And *Jesus* went up to *Jerusalem*. 14.
 And he found in the Temple them that sold
 Oxen and Sheep, and Doves, and Money-
 Changers sitting. 15. And when he had made
 as it were a Scourge of small Cords, he drove
 them all out of the Temple, the Sheep also, and
 the Oxen, and scattered about the Money of the
 Changers, and overturned their Tables. 16. And
 said to those that sold Doves: Take these Things
 hence, and make not the House of my Fa-
 ther a House of Traffick. 17. And his Dis-
 ciples remembered, that it is written: The
 Zeal of thy House hath eaten me up. 18.
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The *Jews* therefore answered and said to him: What Sign shouest thou to us, seeing thou dost these Things. 19. Jesus answered and said to them: Destroy this Temple, and in three Days I will raise it up. 20. The *Jews* then said: Forty-six Years was this Temple building, and wilt thou raise it up in three Days. 21. But he spoke of the Temple of his Body. 22. When therefore he was risen from the Dead, the Disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture, and the Words that Jesus had said. 23. Now when he was at *Jerusalem*, at the Pasche, upon the Festival-Day, many believed in his Name, seeing the Signs which he did. 24. But Jesus did not trust himself to them, for that he knew all Men. 25. And because he needed not that any should give Testimony of Man: For he knew what was in Man.

REFLECTIONS.

The Substance of this Gospel is the same with that which was read on *Tuesday* in the first Week of *Lent*; and, like that, is a Relation of our Blessed Lord's driving the Buyers and Sellers out of the Temple. The Reflections upon that Gospel took Notice of the irreverent Behaviour of too many Christians, in Churches and Chapels, of their profaning those Temples of God, and turning his House of Prayer into a Den of Thieves, by

robbing God of that Honour and Respect which is due to him in those holy Places. But in our Reflections on this Gospel we shall consider another and highly criminal Profanation of the Temples of our Bodies, which the Apostle calls *Temples of the Holy Ghost*, 1 Cor. vi. which are too often profaned by Sin, and unworthily changed into Places of worldly Traffick and Commerce. This Exposition of the Gospel is conformable to what our Saviour says of himself, when he calls his Body a Temple. Every Christian is the Temple of God, wherein he resides by Grace. Their Hearts are so many Altars, on which the Fire of divine Charity ought to be ever burning, and whereon all their inordinate Passions should be consumed in a continual daily Sacrifice: These spiritual and mystick Temples are no less Houses of Prayer, than those material ones, our Churches and Chapels; these latter being a Figure and Representation of the former. If then the Profanation of their material Temple, by an unworthy Traffick and Commerce, was so great a Crime in the *Jews*, as to move the most meek and mild Jesus to a holy Indignation, we have no Reason to doubt, but the Profanation of these spiritual Temples by Christians, is much more criminal, and will bring upon those who are guilty a much more severe and terrible Punishment; and that God will chase all such from his Temple of the heavenly *Jerusalem*, into which no unclean Thing shall ever enter.

As the inspired Apostle calls our Bodies Temples of the Holy Ghost, so the same Holy Ghost positively declares, that he will not dwell in a Body subject to Sin, *Sap. i.* By Sin we profane and abuse those holy Places, consecrated to him in our Baptism, and drive him from thence. This ought to be seriously considered by Christians, and if it were, might be a Means to prevent many of those Abuses which are so common, to the Shame and Scandal of our holy Profession. I shall take Notice of some, by Way of Caution and Admonition, that as this present Season of *Lent* is a Time set apart for cleansing and purifying those Temples from all past Abuses and Profanations; if we have driven away the holy Spirit from us, we may, by sincere Repentance and Amendment, invite him to return again.

Among the scandalous Profanations of these spiritual Temples, may be placed in the first Rank the Sin of Impurity. A Sin most odious and detestable in the Sight of God, who being essentially a most pure and holy Being, must necessarily hate and abominate this Sin; and has by many dreadful Examples shown his Indignation against it, and thousands are now burning in Hell on Account of their Impurities, after having been redeemed by the Blood of Jesus. There are indeed Degrees of this Sin, but the smallest Degree is such a Profanation of the mystical Temple of God, as to drive the holy Spirit from us. A lustful
Thought

Thought consented to. A Pollution voluntarily committed; an unchaste Desire given way to, turn the Houses of God into Dens of Thieves and Robbers. What then can be said of those, who give themselves up to a Habit of Impurity? Whose Thoughts are roving upon, and their Eyes searching after forbidden Objects, whose Entertainments are immodest Songs and Books, and whose Conversations are filled with double Meanings? What can be said of those who abandon themselves to the criminal Act, and blush not to live in an open Practice of Debauchery? Alas! the vain Excuse of human Frailty will be no Plea, nor exempt such from smarting under the severest Effects of God's Wrath and Indignation; and the criminal Passions they here indulge, will add Fuel to those eternal Flames of Hell, which shall burn them hereafter.

Another, and too common Profanation of these mystical Temples is Anger, Hatred, Malice, and Envy, and when these Passions are given Way to, the Holy Ghost no longer abides in us. He is a Spirit of Love, Charity, and Peace; and we ought to give Proof of his Dwelling in our Hearts, by the Practice of these christian Virtues. But to see a Christian on all Occasions transported with Choler, uttering a thousand Imprecations against his Neighbour, seeking all Occasions of Revenge, refusing to pardon and forgive the least Injury, speaking ill of his Neighbour, and robbing him of his good Name, repining at, and envying the good
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good Fortune of another, never content, but murmuring at his own Lot, is so manifest a Violation of the Temple of God, as we may safely venture to affirm, that the Holy Ghost has no Residence therein. Such abuse the House of God, and such Jesus will cast out of his heavenly Mansions. How deplorable are these Passions, which fill the World with Heats and Animosities, and Hell with Souls! shall we think them of little or no Moment? Ah, let us not so unhappily deceive ourselves!

There is another, and more common Way of profaning the Temple of God, and by which his House is changed into a House of Traffick and Commerce. That is by an inordinate Desire, undue Solitude, and Anxiety, to procure the Things of this World; while all our Endeavours are for them, to a Neglect of the one Thing necessary, the Salvation of our Souls. This, as being little thought on, is become almost Universal. Those who are neither given to Impurity, nor are Slaves to Anger and Passion, or any open and criminal Disorder, by an unhappy Carelessness and Negligence in what regards God, and their Souls, violate his holy Place by an unworthy Commerce, and an Attachment to the Riches, Grandeur, and Enjoyments of this World.

This can never become a Christian, or be answerable to that Character. It is degenerating from the Dignity of being Sons of God, and becoming Slaves to his Enemy; for such
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the World is. It is turning his House into a Place of Traffick, and wherein we make a wretched Bargain in exchanging Heaven for Earth; parting with the Happiness of an eternal Kingdom, for the uncertain and transitory Pleasures of a few Moments, for such, and no more, is the Time of our Life, in comparison of Eternity; so that our Interest, no less than our Duty, obliges us to be careful not to be so terribly imposed on; nor thus to profane the Temples of God. Every Sin may be said to be the Abomination of Desolation standing in the holy Place, and a sure Sign of impending Ruin, unless prevented by Repentance and Amendment. To this we are called upon at present, and, if we refuse to comply, we may come to repent our Folly when it is too late.

A S P I R A T I O N S.

O God of infinite Purity and Holiness, thou hast sanctified my Heart as a Temple to thee, and wherein thou art willing to reside. Let me never profane thy holy Place by impure and unlawful Desires, nor drive thee from it by my inordinate Passions. Ah my God! shall I ever be so foolish as to exchange thee, and the Happiness of enjoying thee for any Thing this World can give? Far be this Folly from me. Thou art infinitely more deserving than any Thing this World can afford. All my Endeavours then shall be to please thee. I will
take

take Care to conserve the Temple of my Heart, pure and undefiled. I will cast out from thence all Buyers and Sellers, all inordinate Affections, and whatever is displeasing to thee. O may it be cleansed by thy holy Grace from all sordid Love of Creatures, that thou mayest delight to dwell therein.

O Divine Spirit of Purity and Holiness ! thou hast declared thou wilt not dwell in a Body subject to Sin ; and thou hast consecrated my Body and Soul a living Temple to thee. O come and take up thy Residence therein ; cleanse and purify it by thy holy Grace. May I never profane this Temple by erecting in it the Idols of sinful and worldly Love, nor drive thee from my Heart by impure and unlawful Affections. May the Flame of a most pure and holy Love of thee be ever maintained unextinguished, and sweetly burning on the Altar of my Heart. Here may all worldly and inordinate Affections be totally consumed, that thou alone mayest live and reign in me. O thou pure and chaste Spouse of holy Souls, let me never be unfaithful to thee. May I live and die in thee ! love, and remain inseparably and for ever united to thee !

TUESDAY

✠ C R I S T I A N S ✠

T U E S D A Y

In the fourth Week of *Lent*.

The G O S P E L, St. *John* vii. 14.

NOW about the Midst of the Feast, Jesus went up into the Temple and taught. 15. And the *Jews* wondered, saying: How doth this Man know Letters, having never learned. 16. Jesus answered them, and said: My Doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. 17. If any one will do the Will of him, he shall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. 18. He that speaketh of himself, seeketh his own Glory: But he that seeketh the Glory of him that sent him, he is true, and there is no Injustice in him. 19. Did not *Moses* give you the Law; and none of you keepeth the Law. 20. Why seek you to kill me? The Multitude answered
and

and said: Thou hast a Devil, who seeketh to kill thee. 21. Jesus answered and said to them: One Work have I done, and you all wonder. 22. Therefore *Moses* gave you Circumcision, not because it is of *Moses*, but of the Fathers, and on the Sabbath you circumcise a Man. 23. If a Man receive Circumcision on the Sabbath, so that the Law of *Moses* may not be broken, are you angry at me because I have made a Man whole on the Sabbath-Day. 24. Judge not according to the Appearance, but judge just Judgment. 25. Sometherefore of *Jerusalem* said: Is not this he, whom they seek to kill. 26. And behold he speaketh openly, and they say nothing to him: Have the Rulers known for a Truth that this is the Christ. 27. But we know this Man whence he is, but when the Christ cometh, no one knoweth whence he is. 28. Jesus therefore cried out in the Temple, teaching and saying: You both know me, and you know whence I am: And I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom you know not. 29. I know him, because I am from him, and he hath sent me. 30. They sought therefore to apprehend him: And no Man laid Hands on him; because his Hour was not yet come. 31. But of the People many believed in him.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

Our Blessed Saviour having cured a Man who had been ill of the Palsy eight and thirty Years, the *Jews*, instead of acknowledging the wonderful Miracle, and confessing him to be their Messias, traduced him among the People, as a Sabbath-breaker, and one who violated the Law of *Moses*. They could not deny, or call in Question the Miracle, the poor Man taking up his Bed and walking was too clear and demonstrative a Proof. They therefore gave an ill Turn to it, and found Fault with its being done on the Sabbath-Day, and represented him as one who violated the Precepts of the Law; their malicious Inferences, and the rash Judgments they made of what he did, Christ, with a great Deal of Mildness and Sweetness, endeavoured to correct, bidding them not to judge according to Appearance, but to give a just Judgment. This Advice concerns Christians as well as the *Jews*, and is no less necessary for us. It is, perhaps, one of the greatest of the present Disorders reigning among the Followers of Jesus Christ, that they are too apt to pass rash Judgments upon their Neighbours, and to censure their Persons and Actions according to Appearances, or the first Light wherein they behold them. To remedy which Disorder, we must hearken to our Blessed

fed Lord's Advice, and judge not according to Appearance, but according to Equity and Truth; to do which three Things are requisite. 1. Authority to give and pass Judgment. 2. A thorough Knowledge of what we undertake to give Judgment upon. 3. An upright Intention, void of Passion, Envy, and Prejudice; where these are wanting our Judgments will be found temerarious, rash, and criminal, like that which the *Jews* passed upon Christ.

This is but too often the Case in Regard to the Judgments we pass upon our Neighbour. In the first Place, we judge without Authority. This belongs to God, and he only has Right to judge. It is his peculiar Prerogative, which we must not intrench upon, or usurp to ourselves, by judging one another. The Reason is, because we are equal, Brethren, and all of us Servants of him our great Master. Hence the great Apostle says: *Who art thou that judgest another Man's Servant*, Rom. xiv. No one has any Jurisdiction over him but God, and the Powers established by him; for what is here said of our not having Authority to judge our Neighbour, must be understood of private Persons in Regard of one another. Publick Persons, vested with publick Authority, given to them by God, and whose Place they hold, may, and ought to judge and condemn, reprove and correct the Actions of those under them. This is necessary for the well-governing the World, and the
Good

Good of Society; and without this, all Order would be lost in Anarchy and Confusion.

But if Authority is wanting to our private Judgments of one another, we are generally no less deficient in a thorough and necessary Knowledge of what we pass our Judgment upon. This sufficiently appears by our often judging of the Substance of Things by their Appearance: But there is a wide Difference between Appearance and Truth. When God sent *Samuel* to chuse *David* King in the Place of *Saul*, he bid him not judge of the Sons of *Jesse* by their Looks or outward Appearance, 1 *Reg.* xvi. By not observing the same Caution, we oftentimes censure what is Praise-worthy, and commend what is bad and unjustifiable. Another Proof of our Want of Knowledge is, that we judge our Neighbour's Intentions by his Actions. A very uncertain Rule to go by. The Motives of one and the same Action may be very different; and it may be done by different Persons for different Ends; nor can any one know the Intention of another. God only can do that who beholds the Secrets of all Hearts. If we will judge of the Intention, let it be always for the best, and then we run no Risque; if we are mistaken, it will be an innocent Error. A third Thing which shews a Want of Knowledge, is passing our Judgments upon Hearsays and Reports, without examining further, or waiting to be thoroughly informed. To proceed in this Manner, is to put ourselves
under

under a Necessity of often judging rashly, and is a sure Sign of great Ignorance, or something worse.

A further necessary Condition to pass a right and just Judgment, is to judge with an upright Intention, void of Passion, Envy or Prejudice. And herein, how often do we fail! how often does Interest, Humour, or Inclination, direct our Judgments! The greatest Part of our private Judgments are given by Inclination or Aversion. If we love and have an Esteem for another, all he says or does is well. If not, all is wrong, and his Virtues are censured as Faults. If he is devout, he is stiled a Hypocrite: If sober and frugal, he is called covetous and a Miser: If generous and liberal, he is termed extravagant, and a Prodigal. This being so, and we thus incapable of judging as we ought. How little Reason have we to enter upon that, we have no Authority for, and want the Knowledge and Integrity necessary to avoid Mistakes! If we will be exercising Judgment, let it be upon ourselves, for that we are authorized; for that we have sufficient Knowledge of our Sins and Imperfections; and are in no Danger of being unjust to ourselves. This will turn to our great Advantage; and we are assured by the Apostle, that if we judge and condemn ourselves, we shall not be judged and condemned. As to our Neighbour, if we do judge, let it be always favourably, and not rashly. *Judge not, says Christ, that you be not judged; for with what Judgment you have judged,*

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judged, you shall be judged: And with what Measure you have measured, it shall be measured to you again, Matt. vii.

ASPIRATIONS.

O *Jesus*, the sovereign Judge of all Mankind, who only hast Authority, and dost judge in Equity and Righteousness! Preserve me, by thy Grace, from judging rashly of my Neighbour; that dealing favourably and charitably with him, I may find Mercy and Compassion from thee. I stand in Need, O Lord, of Mercy from thee, for I have often provoked thy Justice. This is what I now humbly beg for, and let me never presume to usurp thy Prerogative to judge and condemn others: Let me turn my Eyes upon myself to behold my own great Weakness and Imperfections, that I may learn to hide and excuse those of others. I will leave them to thee to whom only they are responsible. Thou hast commanded me to be merciful as thou art merciful: And that I should deal to others as I would be dealt with by them. Let this be the sole Rule of my Conduct towards my Neighbours, that I may never hurt them, nor offend thee.

It is, O my God! it is my Desire and Purpose ever to observe this excellent Rule thou hast given me. In this may I copy after the Example, O merciful *Jesus*, which thou hast given me. I daily stand in Need of thy Mercy and Goodness, and shall I be otherwise than
merciful

merciful to my Neighbour? No, my God! I will endeavour to be merciful, as thou my heavenly Father art merciful. I will think ill of no one. I will judge the best and most favourably of every one. Charity shall direct my Thoughts, guide my Words, and regulate all my Actions. Thus will I endeavour to show myself thy true Disciple, O Jesus, my Divine Master, and will hope to find Mercy and Acceptance with thee.





W E D N E S D A Y

In the fourth Week of *Lent*.

The GOSPEL, St. *John* ix. 1.

AND *Jesus* passing by saw a Man who was blind from his Birth. 2. And his Disciples asked him : Rabbi, who hath sinned, this Man, or his Parents, that he should be born blind. 3. *Jesus* answered : Neither has this Man sinned, nor his Parents ; but that the Works of God should be made manifest in him. 4. I must work the Works of him that sent me, while it is Day : The Night cometh when no Man can work. 5. As long as I am in the World, I am the Light of the World. 6. When he had said these Things, he spat on the Ground, and made Clay of the Spittle, and spread the Clay upon his Eyes. 7. And he said to him : Go, wash in the Pool of *Siloe*, which

is interpreted sent, he went therefore, and washed, and he came seeing. 8. The Neighbours therefore, and they who had seen him before that he was a Beggar, said: Is not this he that sat and begged? Some said: This is he. 9. But others said no: But he is like him; but he said: I am he. 10. They said therefore to him: How were thy Eyes opened? 11. He answered; that Man who is called *Jesus* made Clay, and anointed my Eyes, and said to me: Go to the Pool of *Silze* and wash: And I went, I washed, and I see. 12. And they said then to him, where is he? He saith, I know not. 13. They bring him, that had been blind to the *Pharisees*. Now it was the Sabbath when *Jesus* made the Clay, and opened his Eyes. 15. Again therefore the *Pharisees* asked him: How he had received his Sight? And he said to them; he put Clay upon my Eyes, and I washed, and I see. 16. Some therefore of the *Pharisees* said: This Man is not of God, who keepeth not the Sabbath; but others said: How can a Man that is a Sinner do such Miracles? And there was a Division among them. 17. They say therefore to the blind Man again: What sayest thou of him, that hath opened thy Eyes? He said: He is a Prophet. 18. The *Jews* then did not believe of him, that he had been blind, and received his Sight, until they called the Parents of him that received his Sight. 19. And asked them, saying: Is this your Son, whom you say was born blind, how then doth he now see? 20.

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His Parents answered them and said: We know that this is our Son, and that he was born blind. 21. But how he now seeth we know not; or who hath opened his Eyes we know not: Ask himself; he's of Age, let him speak for himself. 22. These Things his Parents said, because they feared the *Jews*; for the *Jews* had already agreed among themselves, that if any Man should confess him to be Christ, he should be put out of the Synagogue. 23. Therefore did his Parents say: He's of Age, ask him. 24. They called therefore again the Man, who had been blind, and said to him: Give Glory to God; we know that this Man is a Sinner. 25. He said therefore to them: If he be a Sinner, I know not: One Thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see. 26. They said then to him: What did he to thee? How did he open thy Eyes? 27. He answered them: I have told you even now, and you have heard; why would you hear it again? Will you also become his Disciples? 28. They reviled him therefore, and said: Be thou his Disciple; we are the Disciples of *Moses*. 29. We know that God spake to *Moses*; but this Man we know not whence he is. 30. The Man answered, and said to them: Why, herein is a wonderful Thing, that you know not from whence he is, and he hath opened my Eyes. 31. Now we know that God doth not hear Sinners; but if a Man be a Server of God, and doth his Will, him he heareth. From the Beginning of the World

it hath not been heard, that any Man hath opened the Eyes of one born blind. 32. Unless this Man were of God, he could not do any Thing. 33. They answered and said to him: Thou wast wholly born in Sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out. 34. Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said to him: Dost thou believe in the Son of God. 35. He answered and said: Who is he, Lord, that I may believe in him. 36. And Jesus said to him: Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. 37. And he said, I believe, Lord, and falling down he adored him.

REFLECTIONS.

It is generally thought one of the greatest Misfortunes that can befall a Man, to be blind, and deprived of his corporal Sight; and not without Reason. A Person in that melancholy Situation, is unable to help himself, and is deprived of the far greatest Part of the innocent Pleasures and Comforts of Life. But, however deplorable, and deserving Compassion such a State is, the Condition of those who are spiritually blind, is much worse, and infinitely more unfortunate. The Number of those who have lost their corporal Sight, is not small; But of those who are spiritually blind, is truly great. And, not to take Notice of those who have been spiritually blind from their Birth, and have the Misfortune never to come to the

Knowledge of God, and the true Faith, if we consider the general Condition of Christians, those who believe in Jesus Christ, and profess the true Catholic Faith, we shall find great Numbers of these truly unfortunate blind People. If it is a Work of Charity to help those to their Sight, who are corporally blind, it is much more so to assist, or endeavour to open the Eyes of the spiritually blind; nor can this be more efficaciously done, than by considering the Causes and Effects of this spiritual Blindness, and to offer some Remedies for it: And this will be best done by carrying on a Parallel between the Blindness of the Eyes, and the Blindness of the Heart.

There are three Things naturally prejudicial to the Eyes, and which deprive a Man of his corporal Sight. 1. Smoak, which dries up the necessary Moistness, weakens their Virtue, and by Degrees takes away the Faculty of seeing. 2. Fire, which produces the same Effects, but sooner, and in a more sensible Manner. 3. Dust, which obfuscates and blinds the Sight. The same may justly be said of the Blindness of the Heart, caused likewise by Smoak, Fire and Dust. Honour and Dignities are truly compared to Smoak, and therefore are stiled in Scripture, *Vanity of Vanities*, Eccles. i. Like Smoak, they raise a thick dark Cloud, through which nothing can be seen; but soon evaporate and pass away. Nevertheless they are Smoak of that malignant Nature, as takes away the Sight of the Mind, and causes a total Blindness

ness of the Heart; and whoever permits his Heart and Affections to be attached to them, and thinks of nothing but the Grandeurs of this World, will soon become blind and unable to see, or find his Way to the Happiness of Heaven. Would to God, the Numbers of these blind Christians were less! But what can be said, when we see the Generality of them so excessive fond of Parade and Show; so much carried away by Pride, and addicted to high and expensive Living? We must pronounce them blind and insensible of their sad Misfortune.

If Fire is another Thing which takes away the corporal Sight, and there is a Fire which produces a Blindness of the Heart: The Fire of Lust and Concupiscence, of Impurity and unlawful Desires. A Person given to Pleasure, and a loose Way of Living, soon becomes spiritually Blind, and that to such a Degree as makes him unable to see either God or himself. Nor is the Effect less prejudicial to the Eyes, which is caused by Dust, which obfuscates and blinds the Sight. A true Figure of that Dust which is raised by an eager Pursuit after Riches, and the Goods of this World, and which causes a Blindness of the Heart. What is it, but an immoderate Desire of Riches, the Trouble and Fatigue of procuring, and an anxious Care to preserve them, that renders the Covetous blind to every Thing else? He is blind to the Necessities of the Poor, he cannot see to relieve their Wants, nor to discern how to make a right Use of his Riches; he loses the Sight of

his Mind, lives in a continual and the worst Sort of Blindness, and while he falsely thinks himself happy in his Riches, he is, of all Men, the most miserable.

These are the fatal Causes of that spiritual Blindness, wherein so many Christians are unhappily involved. Still more unhappy by the sad Effects which this Blindness produce. What can be more deserving our Compassion than to behold the Consequences of being corporally blind? A Man who has lost his Sight is constantly going out of his Way; he frequently falls, and is altogether unable to act, or do any Thing for himself. In like Manner, nothing is more deplorable than to behold the continual Errors and Mistakes of a Sinner spiritually blind. He knows not where he is going, nor where he would go, or what he would be at. He labours and fatigues himself; he walks in rough and hard Ways, which end in frightful Precipices, and fill him with a mortal Inquietude. The wise Man elegantly describes their sad State, making them thus to cry out: *We are wearied in the Paths of Iniquity and Perdition, and have walked in difficult Ways*, Sap. v. This is the Case of an unfortunate blind Sinner, and nothing can help him out of this sad State, but the powerful Grace of God, which will not be refused him, if he sincerely and humbly begs it. His Case, though bad, is not desperate. He may recover his Sight, and be cured of his spiritual Blindness, if he will but apply proper Remedies, and have Recourse to Jesus the true Physician of our Souls. In

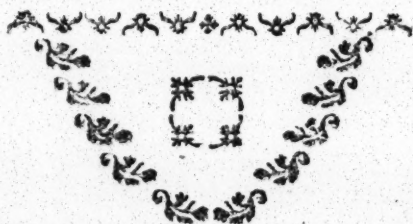
In Order to this, let him imitate the Conduct of the blind Man in the Gospel. This poor Man put himself in the Way, by which Jesus was to pass: The Sinner must take Care not to quit this Way, that is, he must remain constant in his Faith and Religion, if he departs from that, there is no Hopes for him. The blind Man cried aloud to our Saviour to have Pity on him. A Sinner must cry out aloud by Prayer, and beg Mercy of God. Christ made Clay, with his Spittle, of the Dust, and put it upon the blind Man's Eyes; and from hence we may learn, that the Consideration of our Origin, which is from the Dust of the Earth, ought to draw our Hearts from those Vanities, which, by their Dust obfuscate and blind our Sight. The Son of God commanded the blind Man to go and wash in the Pool of *Siloe*, by which are understood the wholesome Waters of Penance, in the Sacrament of Confession, wherein the greatest Sinner may wash away his Sins, recover his spiritual Sight, and with it, the Grace and Favour of God. These are the Remedies which are to be used, and so much the more, as being effectual, and will not fail of producing a desirable Success.

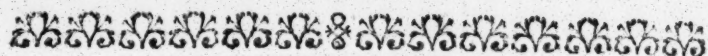
A S P I R A T I O N S.

Ah my God! my *Jesus*, the true Light which enlightens every Man coming into the World! preserve me from all spiritual Blindness. Let not the Smoak of worldly Honours hinder me from seeing my Way to thee, and walking after thee in the Path of Humility and Self-denial. Let not the Fire of unlawful Desires deprive me of my spiritual Sight. Thou hast said: *Blessed are the clean of Heart, for they shall see God*, Mat. v. Preserve then, my Heart pure and clean, that I may have the Happiness to behold thee. Let not the sordid Dust of earthly Riches blind my Eyes, that I may not wander out of the true Way which leads to thy heavenly Kingdom. If I have unhappily fallen into this sad State, may thy holy Grace recover me. Cause the Light of thy holy Spirit to shine upon me, and dissipate all my Darkness, that I may see and know thee, O my God! that I may see and know myself, and my Misery, and timely have Recourse to thee, the only and true Physician of Souls.

O my divine *Jesus*! thou art truly a compassionate Physician of Souls. To thee I have Recourse, speak the Word only and I shall be healed. Put thy powerful Finger upon the Eyes of my Soul, that I may be freed from that unhappy spiritual Darkness I have so long laboured under. In Order to this I will go to the Pool of *Siloe*, I will wash and bathe them

them in the salutary Waters of true Contrition and Penance. In a sorrowful and contrite Heart, I will cry out: *Who will give Water to my Head, and a Fountain of Tears to my Eyes, and I will Day and Night bewail my Misery and Wretchedness caused by Sin. An humble and contrite Heart, I know, O God, thou wilt not despise, and recovering my Sight in the Pardon of my Sins, I will glorify thy holy Name, and be ever hereafter faithful unto thee.*





T H U R S D A Y

In the fourth Week of *Lent*.

The G O S P E L, St. *Luke* vii. 11.

AND it came to pass, afterwards, that he went into a City that is called *Naim*: And there went with him his Disciples, and a great Multitude. 12. Now when he drew near to the Gate of the City, behold a dead Man was carried out, the only Son of his Mother: And she was a Widow; and a great Multitude of the City were with her. 13. Whom when the Lord had seen, being moved with Compassion for her, he said to her: Weep not. 14. And he came near, and touched the Bier: (and they that carried it stood still) and he saith: Young Man, I say to thee arise. 15. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he gave him to his Mother. 16. And Fear

Fear came upon them all; and they glorified God, saying: A great Prophet is risen up among us; and God hath visited his People. 17. And this Rumour of him went forth throughout all *Judea*, and throughout all the Country round about.

REFLECTIONS.

That we must die, is a certain and infallible Truth, evidenced by daily Experience, and of which we have ocular Demonstrations every Day. The young Man, in this Gospel, raised from Death to Life, is a convincing Proof. No one can deny this: And though Infidels, Hereticks and Libertines have denied, ridiculed and made a Jest of every Article of our holy Faith; yet here they agree with us, and subscribe to this serious Truth, *We must die*. That is, our Souls must one Day be separated from our Bodies; we shall be no more in this World, but, taken from all we now see and enjoy, our Bodies must be laid in the cold Grave, there to be devoured by Worms, and reduced to that Dust from which we are formed, while our Souls are carried to an endless happy, or unhappy Eternity. This is the Lot of all Mankind, the irrevocable Decree passed upon all the Sons of *Adam*. No one can plead an Exemption. We may, indeed, for some Years, make a Figure, and cause some Stir and Bustle in the World. We may move about in Pomp and Show, and dazzle the Eyes of those who behold

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hold us, with the Splendour and Magnificence of our Equipage and Retinue. But this can be only for a few Years, a short Space of Time, and then we shall dwindle away like Smoak and Vapours, and fall into Nothing. We may here be rich and great, swim in Pleasure and Delight, but Death will come, and take us away from all that is charming and agreeable in this World. He will also put an End to the Misery of the Poor and Afflicted. He will free them from all the Trouble they now labour under, and lay them in the Grave equally with the most Happy and Prosperous. Death knows no Difference between High and Low, Rich and Poor, Happy or Miserable; he seizes all alike, Old and Young; both Sexes; all Conditions must own this Truth. *It is appointed for all Men once to die*, Heb. ix.

But if nothing is more certain than that we must die, nothing is more uncertain than the Time when. Perhaps within a few Years, one Year, a Month, a Week, To-morrow, this Day, or this very Hour. We are continually exposed, and know not when Death may come. How many Instances have we of sudden Death, of unforeseen Accidents, which have deprived Men of their Lives? And while there is but one Way to come into the World, there are Thousands to go out of it. A Fever kills one, a Consumption another, and an Apoplexy a Third. Many find the smallest and most inconsiderable Accidents the Cause of their Death. A little Scratch, a small Hurt, a slight Wound
neglected

neglected at first, increases and proves mortal. Even long Distempers, and which afford Time to prepare for Death, may be truly called sudden, since all Distempers have a Beginning, and generally seize us when we think nothing of them. This, at first, is not regarded, thinking it will pass; but not passing, a Physician is sent for: He comes, and bids the sick Man be of Courage, assures him there is no Danger, and applies his Remedies which have no Effect. This Sickness grows stronger, Nature weaker, and the Patient dies. Is not all this sudden and unexpected? And who can tell how soon this may be his own Case? Youth, Strength, or the Prime of our Years, are no Security. The Widow's Son, whom our Saviour raised from the Dead, was a young Man, in the Flower of his Age, but died, and was carried out to be buried, and had been so, but that *Jesus* met the Funeral, and pitying his Mother's Tears, restored him to Life.

This being so, what ought to be the Consequence of this Reflection? Does it not follow that we ought diligently and in Time to prepare for Death? This cannot be denied: And yet, alas! how careless and negligent are we herein? How few are there, who care to hear of Death? But let us seriously consider that if Death finds us unprepared, we shall be eternally miserable: Whereas, if by the constant Exercise of a pious Life, we are ready to meet it, Death will be no more to us, than a happy Passage from the Miseries of this World,

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to the Happiness of the next. Nor must we flatter ourselves with mistaken Motions of a Death-bed Repentance, or of preparing ourselves in our last Sickness. When that comes we are to be ready, and not have our Preparations to make. Nothing is more dangerous than to put off from Time to Time, and delay our Preparation for Death. It may justly provoke God to take us away suddenly, and not allow us a Moment of Time. This has been the Case of many such procrastinating Christians, who having put off their Preparation for Death, from one Time to another, from this Time to that, at last have found no Time, and been eternally lost. To prevent which Misfortune, now, while we have Time and Opportunity, while we enjoy Life and Health, let us seriously prepare ourselves for our last End, and remember that the best and only safe and surest Preparation for Death is a good Life, without which, we have little Reason, even to hope for a good Death, or to die well. This being a Matter of so very great Importance, our own Interest ought to move us. We can only die once. Once we must die, and no more. If, when the Time comes, we are not prepared to die as we ought, we are eternally lost; but to die once well, will make us happy for ever.

A S P I R A T I O N S.

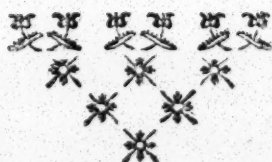
Ah, my Lord and my God! in whom I live, move, and have my Being. May I live
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to thee, by dying daily to myself and the World. I must die one Day, and be eternally separated from the Things of this World. How little Reason have I to be fond of any Thing here, which I cannot enjoy very long : and know not how soon I may be deprived of. I must die ; but alas ! I know not when. How necessary is it then, that I should think of Death, and not only think of it, but prepare for it ! O Lord, I confess and acknowledge this Necessity, and I beg the Assistance of thy Grace, that I may do it. For that End, may I constantly have an Eye towards my last Hour, that I may not forget thee by Sin, nor fall a Prey to the Enemy of my Soul. I will, O my God ! by the Help of thy Grace, make it my serious and sincere Endeavours to prepare myself to quit the World ; and to die in thy Service. I will live in thy Fear, that I may die in thy Favour. When Death shall close my Eyes to this World, may I open them in the other towards thee, never to close them more. Then shall my happy Soul sing with Joy and Triumph : *O Death where is thy Sting ? O Grave where is thy Victory,* 1 Cor. xv. for by dying, I have gained Heaven and a happy Eternity.

And now, my Soul ! what need we to fear Death ? A Life of Virtue, a Life spent in the Service of God will remove all its real and imaginary Terrors, will blunt the Sharpness of its Dart, and render it but a swift and easy Passage to Heaven and eternal Bliss. Thou hast decreed, O God, that all Men should
die

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die once, and no more, and if I die once well, I shall be happy for ever. I bow down and submit to this thy universal Decree. I offer up to thee my Life, ready and willing to die this Day, or at any other Time, when, where and in what Manner thou pleasest. Whenever, dearest Lord, thou takest me from this World, take me to thyself, and I shall be happy and safe. O may I breathe out my Soul in my last expiring Moments with a perfect Conformity to thy holy Will,



FRIDAY



F R I D A Y

In the fourth Week of *Lent*.

The GOSPEL, St. *John* xi. 1.

NOW there was a certain Man sick, called *Lazarus*, of *Bethania*, the Town of *Mary* and of *Martha* her Sister. 2. (And *Mary* was she that anointed the Lord with Ointment, and wiped his Feet with her Hair; whose Brother *Lazarus* was sick). 3. His Sisters therefore sent to him, saying: Lord, behold he whom thou lovest is sick. 4. And *Jesus* hearing it, said to them: This Sicknefs is not unto Death, but for the Glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified by it. 5. Now *Jesus* loved *Martha*, and her Sister *Mary* and *Lazarus*. When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he still remained in the same Place

two

two Days. 7. And after that he said to his Disciples, let us go into *Judea* again. 8. The Disciples said to him: Rabbi, but now the *Jews* sought to stone thee, and goest thou thither again. 9. *Jesus* answered: Are there not twelve Hours of the Day? If a Man walk in the Day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the Light of this World. 10. But if he walk in the Night, he stumbleth, because the Light is not in him. 11. Those Things he said, and after that he said to them: *Lazarus* our Friend sleepeth; but I go to awake him from Sleep. 12. His Disciples therefore said: Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. 13. But *Jesus* spoke of his Death, and they thought that he spoke of Rest by sleeping. 14. Then *Jesus* said to them plainly; *Lazarus* is dead. 15. And I am glad for your Sake, that I was not there, that you may believe, but let us go to him. 16. *Thomas* therefore who is called *Dydymus*, said to his Fellow Disciples: Let us go also, that we may die with him. 17. *Jesus* therefore came; and found that he had been four Days already in the Grave. 18. Now *Bethania* was near to *Jerusalem*, about fifteen Furlongs. 19. And many of the *Jews* were come to *Martha* and *Mary*, to comfort them concerning their Brother. 20. *Martha* therefore as soon as she heard that *Jesus* was come, went to meet him; but *Mary* sat at Home. 21. *Martha* therefore said to *Jesus*: Lord, if thou hadst been here, my Brother had not died. 22. But now also I know, that whatsoever thou wilt

wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. 23. *Jesus* saith to her : Thy Brother shall rise again. 24. *Martha* saith to him : I know he shall rise again in the Resurrection at the last Day. 25. *Jesus* said to her : I am the Resurrection and the Life : He that believeth in me, although he be dead, shall live. 26. And every one that liveth, and believeth in me, shall not die for ever : Believeſt thou this ? 27. She saith to him : Yes Lord, I have believed, that thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God, who art come into this World. 28. And when she had said these Words, she went and called her Sister *Mary* secretly, saying : The Master is come, and calleth for thee. 29. She as soon as she heard this, riseth quickly and cometh to him. 30. For *Jesus* was not yet come into the Town, but he was still in that Place, where *Martha* had met him. 31. The *Jews* therefore who were with her in the House, and comforted her, when they saw *Mary* that she rose up quickly and went forth, followed her, saying : She goeth to the Grave to weep there. 32. When *Mary* therefore was come where *Jesus* was she fell down at his Feet, and saith to him : Lord, hadſt thou been here, my Brother had not died. 33. *Jesus* therefore when he saw her weeping, groaned in the Spirit, and troubled himself. 34. And said : Where have you laid him ? They say to him : Come Lord, and see. 35. And *Jesus* wept. 36. The *Jews* therefore said : Behold how he loved him. 37. But some of them said, could not he that open-
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ed the Eyes of the Man born blind, have caused that this Man should not die. 38. *Jesus* therefore groaning again in himself, came to the Sepulchre: Now it was a Cave; and a Stone was laid over it. 39. *Jesus* saith: Take away the Stone. *Martha*, the Sister of him that was dead, saith to him: Lord, by this Time he stinketh; for he is now of four Days. 40. *Jesus* saith to her: Did I not say to thee, that if thou believe, thou shalt see the Glory of God. 41. They took therefore the Stone away, and *Jesus* lifting up his Eyes, said: Father, I give thee Thanks, that thou hast heard me. 42. And I knew that thou dost always hear me, but because of the People who stand about have I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. 43. When he had said these Words: he cried with a loud Voice: *Lazarus* come forth. 44. And presently he that had been dead came forth bound Feet and Hands with winding Bands, and his Face was bound about with a Napkin. *Jesus* said to them: Loose him and let him go. 45. Many therefore of the *Jews* that were come to *Mary* and *Martha*, and had seen the Things that *Jesus* did, believed in him.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

Of all the Miracles of our Blessed Saviour, none is accompanied with more wonderful and particular Circumstances than that of *Lazarus* being raised from the Dead, as related in the Gospel of this Day. Christ had left *Jerusalem*, to avoid the Fury of the *Jews*, who sought to stone him. Being retired beyond *Jordan*, *Martha* and *Mary*, Sisters of *Lazarus*, sent to acquaint him, that he whom he loved was sick, meaning their Brother. They did not name him, nor desire that *Jesus* would come and heal him. 'Twas enough to let *Jesus* know, that he, whom he loved was sick. When we have the Happiness to be loved by God, we are sure never to be abandoned, but to find in him, at all Times, a prompt and ready Assistance. Christ loved *Mary* and *Martha* and their Brother. They frequently received him into their House, and their kind Hospitality towards him, was recompensed by the raising *Lazarus* from Death to Life. He was sick; he died and was buried, and had laid in the Grave four Days; but when *Jesus* said: *Lazarus come forth*; he arose alive and well, and lived many Years afterwards. In reflecting upon which, two Things present themselves to my Thoughts, the Consideration of which may be of great Benefit, as they are Matters of great Edification. The Death of *Lazarus* represents the

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Condition of a just Man or pious Person, who permits himself to be perverted, and, by losing his Virtue, spiritually dies. The Resurrection of *Lazarus* is an Image of the State of a Sinner converted, and rising from the Death of Sin to a Life of Grace. Two Things which demand our serious Attention, and which the Miracle of this Day will perfectly instruct us in.

As nothing corrupts instantly, but by Degrees, so a Man does not usually fall on a sudden from Virtue to Vice, that is, from the Habit of one to the Habit of the other. All Sicknefs has its Beginning, its Progress and its End. The same may be said of spiritual Illness, and of one who falls from a virtuous to a vicious Course. *Lazarus* was first sick and out of Order : This Sicknefs increased upon him, he died, and when our Saviour raised him to Life, he had been four Days in the Grave, and began to stink. Just Figure of one who is perverted from Virtue to Vice. He begins to be careless and negligent in his Duty, from whence he easily slides into a State of Luke-warmness and Tepidity, when the Distemper may be said to grow stronger, it being extremely difficult to work upon a tepid and lukewarm Christian ; because under the Pretext of not being guilty of enormous Sins, he falsely thinks himself safe and in no Danger, which afterwards appears ; for omitting, by Degrees, his Practice of Virtue, Vice takes Place, he becomes quite changed, and so the Grace and
Favour

Favour of God is lost, and he becomes spiritually dead, and by the Corruption of his ill Example, stinks and infects others. This is the sad Condition of a just Man, perverted by the Spirit of the World: And from this spiritual Death nothing can raise him but the powerful Grace of God. Ah, *Lazarus, come forth.* This indeed is able to raise such a one from Death to Life, and which God is both willing and able to do, if a Sinner himself does not put an Obstacle and hinder it. Let us consider then this miraculous Conversion; this Resurrection of a Sinner from the Death of Sin, to a spiritual Life of Grace: And of which the Resurrection of *Lazarus* is an instructive Representation.

Christ raised *Lazarus* to Life, at the Prayers of his Sisters *Mary* and *Martha*. From hence we may learn to pray for our fallen Brethren. There are a great many Sinners whose Conversion is owing to the Prayers of their Friends: And God is oftentimes pleased to show his Favour to such, moved by the Charity of others who pray for them. Christ commanded they should remove the Stone which covered the Grave of *Lazarus*, to let us understand, that before we can thus spiritually rise, we must remove all Obstacles and Impediments on our Parts. This is not hard nor difficult to do, and a sincere Desire to be converted will put us upon doing it. The Stone was no sooner removed, but Christ said, with a loud Voice; *Lazarus come forth*; to teach us that to work this Resurrection, the Voice of God speaking
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by his Grace, is absolutely necessary. *Lazarus* obeyed the Voice of our Saviour, and immediately came forth. If we desire to rise from the Grave of Sin, we must obey the Voice of God, hearken to his Calls, and not resist the Motions of his Grace; if we refuse or defer and put off our Compliance, we may never rise, but remain dead and in the Grave. *Lazarus* being come forth from his Monument, our Saviour ordered him to be loosed, and the Winding Bands to be taken from him. This last Circumstance signifies that God requires a penitent Sinner should have Recourse to his Ministers, the Priests of the Church, in Order to be unloosed from the Bands of their Sins. Christ could, by a Word, have made the Bands to have fallen off *Lazarus*, but he would have his Disciples loose, and take them away. God by himself alone can break the Chains of our Sins; but he will have us address ourselves to them, to whom he has given Power and Authority to free us from them in his Name, and to set us at Liberty. Thrice happy those, whom our merciful Lord thus calls from the Grave of Sin, and raises to a Life of Grace; of such it may be said, their Infirmary was not to Death, but that the Power of God's Grace might be manifested in them; and which thus calls them forth to eternal Life,

A S P I R A T I O N S.

It is thou alone, O my God ! that can work this great Change, and raise me to Life, when I am dead in Sin. Do so, dear Lord, and let my Soul experience this happy Effect of thy Goodness. Call aloud, and say to me : *Come forth.* And, O may these powerful Words sound in my Ears, and then I shall immediately rise. Loose me from all those Bands with which I am incumbered, and free me from all Hinderances to obey and follow thee. When thou hast thus restored me to Life, perfect what thou hast begun, and never let me fall again into that sad State. Preserve me from all Coldness, Negligence and Indifference ; and permit not the Enemy of my Soul to prevail over me. Though I have been long dead, and begin to stink by the Corruption of my Manners, thy powerful Grace can restore me to Life, and cleanse me from all Corruption and Filth. Then shall my Soul sing aloud the Wonders of thy Mercy, and Praise, and bless thy holy Name.

I have just Reason so to do, O thou bountiful Giver of Life. Often have I experienced this thy Goodness and Mercy to me, and shall I be so horribly ungrateful as to abuse this thy Mercy by thus dying again ? Ah, rather let me be annihilated and drop into Nothing, than to live here a Moment wilfully to offend thee. No, my God ! that spiritual Life thou hast restored me I will endeavour to conserve and de-

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dedicate myself totally to thy Love and Service.
I will love thee, O true Life and Happiness of
my Soul ! I will love thee with all my Heart,
with all my Mind, and with all my Strength.
In thee will I live, and in thee I desire to die.
I will remain no longer in the cold Grave of
Lukewarmness and Tepidity ; I will arise at thy
gracious Call, and will serve thee with Zeal
and Fervour, to the last Moment of my Life
here, that I may live and be eternally happy
with thee hereafter.





S A T U R D A Y

In the fourth Week of *Lent*.

The G O S P E L, St. *John* viii. 12.

A G A I N therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying: I am the Light of the World; he that followeth me walketh not in Darknes, but shall have the Light of Life. 13. The *Pharisees* then said to him: Thou givest Testimony of thyself, thy Testimony is not true. 14. Jesus answered and said to them: Although I give Testimony of myself, my Testimony is true; for I know whence I came, and whither I go: But you know not whence I come, and whither I go. 15. You judge according to the Flesh, I judge not any Man. 16. And if I do judge, my Judgment is true, because I am not alone: But I, and the Father that sent me. 17. And in your Law it

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is written, that the Testimony of two Men is true. 18. I am one that give Testimony of myself: And the Father that sent me giveth Testimony of me. 19. They said therefore to him: Where is thy Father? Jesus answered: You neither know me, nor my Father. If you did know me, you would perhaps have known my Father also. 20. These Words Jesus spoke in the Treasury teaching in the Temple: And no Man laid hold of him, because his Hour was not yet come.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

It was a false Accusation the *Jews* laid to our blessed Saviour when they said: He was not true, because he bore Testimony of himself, when he said he was the Light of the World; and that whoever followed him, walked not in Darkness. Christ answered, and wiped off the Aspersions by telling them, tho' his Testimony was of himself, yet it was true, and confirmed by the Testimony of his heavenly Father, and those many evident and undeniable Miracles which he wrought in their Sight, to convince them that he was the Son of God, and their promised Messias. It was a surprising Obstinacy in the *Jews* not to yield to that undeniable Conviction, and those ocular Demonstrations our Saviour gave them; and for which he told them they were inexcusable. But what can be said of those, who by Profession are Christians, and pretend to believe in Jesus Christ;

Christ; and by their Conduct in the practical Part of their Lives, show too great a Resemblance to the *Jews*, who did not acknowledge him? That there are many who do so, is but too evident; and to consider the Lives of Numbers of Christians, will put it past Dispute.

Christ says of himself, he is the Light of the World, and whoever follows him walks not in Darkness. Whoever therefore does not follow him in the Road of his Gospel-Precepts, most certainly walks in the Dark. To follow Christ, is to walk in the Way of Humility, Self-denial, Mortification, and Penance. This is that narrow and strait Way which leads to Life, and he himself says, few there are who find it. Nor is this to be wondered at, when so many choose to walk in the Broad-Way of Pride, Ease and Luxury. When nothing is so much studied as Vanity and Folly; when the Modes and Fashions of the World are the great and sole Rule of their Conduct. To follow Jesus Christ, is to fly from the dangerous Vanities of the World, to have a Dislike to every Thing that may captivate our Hearts and Affections, to draw our Minds off from thinking of our Salvation, *Matt. vii.* But how small is the Number of these? The Things of this World could not more eagerly, and with greater Passion, and Assiduity be sought after, if we were commanded to procure them before all other Things. Is it not evident then, that the far greater Number of Christians, notwithstanding

their outward Profession, do not follow Christ, and by Consequence are walking in the Dark, even under the Meridian Light of the Gospel.

To follow Christ, is to walk in the Way of Love, Charity, forgiving Injuries, bearing with one another, helping and assisting one another. But how little of this is to be found among Christians? How much Hatred, Malice, Strife and Contention, do we daily behold? Is this following Christ? Far from it. It is walking in the Dark, and following the blind Guides of our unmortified and irregular Passions, who will lead us into a Ditch where we shall undoubtedly perish. There are others who refuse to follow Christ, in being directed by those Guides he has placed over them; who take upon themselves to be their own Directors; who are for widening the narrow Path! and for reconciling the Modes and Fashions of the World to the Maxims of the Gospel. These, and of whom there are too many, are far from following Christ, and that Light which he has set up to direct them in the Way. No Wonder such stumble and fall; and walking thus in the Dark, never arrive at the Kingdom of Light, but lose themselves in the wild Mazes of Error and fatal Mistakes.

I am the Light of the World, says Jesus Christ, and it is by his Light we must walk. This is what the true and sincere Christian does. Whatever is not conformable to the Doctrine of Christ's Gospel he suspects; looks upon it as an *Ignis fatuus*; a false Light, a deceitful Glimmer-

Glimmering not to be trusted. Hence, he endeavours to regulate himself and all his Actions, by the Gospel-Rule, and does not so much depend upon the Character or Profession of a Christian, as he is careful to live like one. This appears by his constant Attendance upon the Service of God; the Care he takes to keep under and bridle his Passions; to live in Peace and Charity with all Men, and to do Good to all. Happy Souls! the few which are chosen and who have thus learned, by following their Divine Master, to condemn and despise the World, its empty Noise, and pompous Show! These are they, of whom, and to whom, Christ says: *Fear not, little Flock; for it hath pleased the Father to give you a Kingdom*, Luke xii. These are they who are stiled in Scripture Children of Light. And such we are all invited to be. And the Apostle St. Paul, *Ephes. vi.* exhorts us all to cast off the Works of Darkness, and to put on the Armour of Light. This our Mother the Church earnestly recommends to us, especially at this Time, that disposing ourselves for celebrating the sacred Mysteries of our Blessed Lord's Passion, and glorious Resurrection, we may so follow him in the narrow Path of his Sufferings, that we may rise with him likewise, and share with him in his Glory.

A S P I R A T I O N S.

O sovereign Light of the World ! Adorable Saviour of Mankind ! Shine upon me with thy glorious Light, and dissipate all the Darkneſs of Sin. I deſire to follow thee, O Jeſus ! for thou art the only ſafe Way, the unerring Truth and true Life. While I walk after thee, I need fear no Danger ; but when I fooliſhly forſake thee, I expoſe myſelf every Moment to a certain Ruin. If I follow the World and live by its Maxims, I walk in the Dark, and ſhall be infallibly loſt. If I follow my Paſſions and corrupt Inclinations, where will thoſe blind Guides lead me ? to a fatal Precipice, where I muſt of Neceſſity fall and periſh. I will then guard myſelf againſt them, and adhere cloſely to thee. I will follow thee, without turning either to the Right or Left-hand. I will walk in the narrow Path, and ſtrive to enter in at the ſtraight Gate, that with thee I may enjoy eternal Life. For this I beg the Aſſiſtance of thy Grace ; without thy Grace, alas ! I can do nothing.

O Jeſus, the true and indeficient Light, which illuminates every Man coming into the World ! illuminate my Soul with thy reſplendant Rays, that I may perfectly ſee my Way to thee. O Life by which I live, and without which I die ! may I live by thee, and to thee only. O true Life of my Soul, and all that I wiſh and deſire ! my God, and my All ! Every
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ry Thing without thee is empty Nothing.
Without thy Light I see nothing. All is dark,
and how then shall I find my Way to thee?
*Enlighten my Eyes, O God, that I walk not in
the Shades of Death,* Psal xii. Then shall I see
thy Beauty and thy Goodness, and my Heart
tend to, and love thee. I will follow thee,
and I shall be safe from all Dangers till I hap-
pily arrive at the clear Vision and Enjoyment
of thee.





P A S S I O N S U N D A Y.

SO called from the immediate Consideration of the Sufferings of our Blessed Saviour, to which the Church now more earnestly invites us. For though the whole Fast of *Lent* is designed as a Preparation duly to commemorate the Passion and Resurrection of our Lord; yet, from this *Sunday* till *Easter-Day* the Church requires we should more nearly turn our Thoughts, and direct our Devotions to the Honour and Remembrance of Christ's sacred Passion and Sufferings; and that we may suffer something with him and for him; anciently, this latter Part of *Lent* was fasted with greater Rigour than the rest. St. *Epiphanius* says (1), All the Faithful were wont to observe the six Days of the Pasche, as Days of *Xerophagia*, that is, in dried Meats. And the Apostolick

(1) See Father *Thomassin* on the Feasts of the Church, *Lib.* 2. *C.* 14.

Constitutions (2) speak in the same Manner, when they order the Faithful to fast with Bread, Salt, Herbs, and Water only, during the six Days of the Pasche. Where it is to be observed that the ancient Fathers give the Name of *Pasche* to the Passion of our Saviour, as well as to his Resurrection. In the Eastern Churches they observed as the Passion Time only the last Week in *Lent*, beginning from *Palm-Sunday*. But in the *Latin Church*, Passion-Time begins from the *Sunday* before *Palm Sunday*; from the Beginning of which till *Easter-Day*, the Crucifixes and Altar Pictures are veiled and covered, and the Church omits her common Doxology, or *Gloria Patri*, in the Sacrifice of the Mass, and in some Parts of her Office, to signify to us, that Passion Time is a Time of Mourning for the Sufferings of our Lord, and for our Sins, which were the Cause of his Sufferings.

The G O S P E L, St. *John* viii. 46.

W H O among you will convict me of Sin? If I speak the Truth, why do you not believe me? 47. He that is of God, heareth the Words of God: Therefore you hear them not, because you are not of God. 48. The *Jews* then answered, and said to him: Do not we say well, that thou art a *Samaritan*,

(2) Id. *ibid.* Lib. 5. C. 17.

and

and hast a Devil? 49. *Jesus* replied: I have not a Devil; but I honour my Father, and you have dishonoured me. 50. But I seek not my own Glory: There is one who seeketh and judged. 51. Amen, Amen, I say to you: If any Man keep my Word, he shall not see Death for ever. 52. The *Jews* therefore said: Now we know thou hast a Devil: *Abraham* is dead, and the Prophets; and thou sayest: If any Man keep my Word, he shall not taste Death for ever. 53. Art thou greater than our Father *Abraham*, who is dead? And the Prophets are dead: Whom dost thou make thyself? 54. *Jesus* answered: If I glorify myself, my Glory is nothing: It is my Father who glorifieth me, of whom you say, that he is your God. 55. And you have not known him; but I know him. And if I shall say, I know him not, I shall be a Liar like unto you: But I do know him, and do keep his Word. 56. Your Father *Abraham* rejoiced that he might see my Day: He saw it, and was glad. 57. The *Jews* then said to him: Thou art not yet fifty Years old, and hast thou seen *Abraham*? 58. *Jesus* said to them: Amen, Amen, I say to you, before *Abraham* was, I am. 59. They therefore took up Stones to throw at him; but *Jesus* hid himself, and went out of the Temple.

REFLECTIONS.

How happy would it be for Christians, were they so careful and circumspect in their Behaviour; so exact in the Observance of their Duty, as to be able to say: *Who can convict me of Sin?* It is certain, that Christianity engages the Professors of it to some Degree of Sanctity: And though we cannot pretend to Impeccability, or, like our Divine Master, to be incapable of sinning: Nevertheless, by endeavouring to the utmost of our Power to follow his Example, and by regulating our Lives according to the Maxims of Jesus Christ, whose assisting Grace is always ready to help us, we may be able to say: Who is there that can convict me of a voluntary and wilful Transgression of his Commands? And though we are not impeccable by Nature, and since the Corruption of it, through the Fall of our first Parents, are prone to Sin from our Youth, and find a Law in our Members fighting against the Law of our Mind, and holding us Captives in the Law of Sin, *Rom. vii.* Yet the Grace of God by Jesus Christ our Lord, is able to deliver us from this Bondage and Death, and to restore us to the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God: In which glorious Quality we may conserve and maintain ourselves, by doing

ing the Will of God. *For he that is of God, heareth the Word of God*, says Jesus Christ, *John viii.* and not only heareth it, but performs it, as sensible it is such, and only such that can say: *Who can convict me of Sin?* From hence it evidently follows, that the Commands of God are possible to be kept. That the Spirit of Christianity consists in the Observance of them; and that if we do not observe them, it is our own Fault. These are Points which deserve our serious Consideration, and afford an ample Subject for our Reflections on the Gospel of this Day.

That the Commandments of God are possible to be kept, is an Article of our Faith, not to be questioned, or denied by any who call themselves Catholicks. If it is necessary to observe them, in Order to be saved; it is reasonable they should be within our Power to keep. Our blessed Saviour said to the Lawyer, in the Gospel: *If thou wilt enter into Life, keep the Commandments*, Matt. xix. But we cannot suppose, without the highest Injustice to him, that our Lord would have bid the Lawyer keep them, if they were impossible to be observed. How hard would our Condition be, if we were obliged to observe what was not in our Power to do! In this Case, our Condition would be truly miserable: But God has not so dealt with us. He is not a cruel Tyrant to command Impossibilities under the Pain of eternal Damnation, as he does keeping the Commandments. He is not a hard and
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austere Master, who expects to reap where he has not sowed, or to require more than he has given. No, he is an indulgent Lord, a generous Master, and a tender Parent. His Yoke is easy, and his Burden is light, *Matt. xi.* His Commands are not heavy, much less impossible, *1 John v.* We are able, and and by the Assistance of his Grace, may observe what he requires of us. To this may be added, that it must be a monstrous Absurdity, highly injurious to God, and unworthy of him, to admit the Rewards and Punishments of a future State, for those who do, or do not observe them; and yet pretend it is impossible to keep the Commandments. Far be such unworthy Thoughts from us. Let us confess the Possibility of keeping them, and learn to know that the Spirit of Christianity consists in the Observance of them.

If the Duty of a Christian consisted only in Speculation, in acknowledging Christ to be the Son of God, and believing those sacred Truths he has revealed. If it were enough to talk of Virtue, without the Practice of it, then, indeed, no one would deny Christianity to be a very easy and commodious Religion; and the Ministers of the Gospel would have infinitely less Pains to bring Christians to their Duty. But to entertain such Notions, is not more injurious to the Gospel than prejudicial to those who think so. Such a Notion would be to give the Lie to Truth itself; and contradict that
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positive Assertion of Jesus Christ: *Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the Will of my Father who is in Heaven, Matt. vii. The Will of God, is, that we live soberly, godly and piously in this World, abstaining from all Impiety and worldly Desires, Titus ii.* This is the Spirit of Christianity. This the Substance of the Commandments, which we must observe. But if we content ourselves with the Name of Christian, and do no more. If our Lives are a Contradiction to that sacred Name, in vain we think to be numbered among the Children of God. We shall be convicted of Sin, and be condemned and punished for it.

It is an excellent Advice St. Peter gives, when he bids us, *strive by good Works to make our Calling and Election sure, 2 Pet. i.* We are called to the Knowledge of God, and his true Faith; we are chosen into the Number of his Children; and it is both our Interest and Duty to secure this Election, by Perseverance in his Service. *Then are you my Disciples and Friends, says Christ, if you do what I command you, John xv.* From hence it is clear, that Christianity is a practical Religion. If it instructs us in holy Principles, those Principles are to direct and influence our Morals: And it will be of no Service to us to profess the Principles of the Gospel, if our Practice is not conformable thereto. And yet, alas! practical Piety seems almost quite laid aside;
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and though more Talk of Religion can hardly be, yet never less appeared in the Conduct of Christians. Surprising Paradox! Men talk, read, and hear much of Religion and Piety, but practice little or none. It cannot be because practical Piety is impossible. The Contrary of that has been demonstrated. It cannot be, for that Christians have nothing to do with the practical Part of Religion. The Profession of Christianity supposes it; and the Essence of Christianity consists in it. The Cause then must be the Perverseness of Men's Wills, the sad Delusion they give themselves up to, and a strong Attachment to the Things of this World. The Commandments of God are not impossible. It is no less our Interest than Duty to observe them. If we do not, it is our own Faults, and we shall justly smart under the Punishment of our Non-Observance.

That we ourselves are, only, to blame, and in Fault, if we do not observe the Commandments, is evident from what has been said; and from this, that, though the Lives of Christians are for the Generality of them, exceeding irregular, and no Ways conformable to the Sanctity of their Profession; yet some there are who are not tainted with the almost general Corruption of Vice. Some there are, who are good and virtuous, whose Lives are bright Examples of practical Piety, in a strict Observance of the Gospel Precepts. These we may, and ought to, imitate. What they
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do, we may do: And their strict Piety is a just Reproach to our Carelessness and Negligence. What we behold another, or many others to do, we cannot pretend not to be in our Power, when we are equally capable, and have the same Help and Assistance. Nor is there any one who can say that any Thing necessary, to do what God requires, is wanting. The Grace of God is the same, and is offered by him to every one. The Helps and Assistances of the Holy Sacraments are designed for every one. God's holy Word is equally preached to all, and all are equally told their Duty, and what they must do to obtain eternal Life. If any Thing is wanting it is on our Part, a Defect of the Will, but that renders us more inexcusable, and if we fail of Heaven and Happiness, by not observing the Commandments, we can only blame ourselves, and shall one Day see our Folly, when it is too late to retrieve it.

A S P I R A T I O N S.

O Jesus, the bright Mirrour of Innocence and Purity, whom no one can convict of Sin ! give me Grace to copy after that perfect Example thou hast given me, that I may never wilfully be guilty of Sin. Dear Redeemer of Mankind ! I desire to imitate that most excellent Pattern, and to transcribe thy Virtues in my Life and Conversation. I acknowledge thy Goodness in that I am a Member of thy Church. I am ashamed that I have hitherto so little complied with the Duties of my Profession, and beg thy Assistance that for the future I may be more careful. As my Faith is sound, let my Life be holy, in an exact Observance of thy Commands, that I may edify my Neighbour, and procure thy Honour and Glory. Thou hast said : He that is of thee, heareth thee. I desire to belong to thee, and therefore will I hear thee, and not only hear thee, but in all Things obey thee.

It is thus only, O my Divine Master, that I can show that I am thy true Disciple and belong to thee. Thou hast given me a sweet and easy Law, a Law of Love, which makes all Things easy, and I will love thy holy Law, it shall be sweeter than Honey to the Mouth, or Musick to the Ears. I will meditate upon it Day and Night, and let it be the only Rule of my Conduct. Thy Commands, like thyself, are sweet and amiable, designed to bring me to
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the happy Enjoyment of thee. O bounteous Lord, who in all thou requirest of me, seekest nothing but my Good. Ah, may I daily endeavour to correspond with thy gracious Designs, by an inviolable Observance of all what thou commandest: And, O may I be so happy as to hear, one Day, *Well done, good and faithful Servant, enter into the Joy of thy Lord,* St. Matt. xxv.





M O N D A Y

In Passion Week.

The G O S P E L, St. *John* vii. 32.

AND the Rulers and *Pharisees* sent Officers to apprehend him. 33. *Jesus* therefore said to them : Yet a little while am I with you ; and I go to him that sent me. 34. You shall seek me, and shall not find me : And where I am, thither you cannot come. 35. The *Jews* therefore said among themselves : Whither will this Man go, that we shall not find him ; will he go unto the dispersed among the *Gentiles*, and teach the *Gentiles* ? 36. What is this saying that he hath said : You shall seek me, and shall not find me ; and where I am, thither you cannot come ? 37. And on the last and great Day of the Feast, *Jesus* stood
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and cried, saying : If any Man thirst, let him come to me and drink. 38. He that believeth in me, as the Scripture saith, Rivers of living Water shall flow out of him. 39. Now this he said of the Spirit, which they who believed in him should receive ; for as yet the Spirit was not given, because *Jesus* was not yet glorified.

R E F L E C T I O N S .

What Christ, in this Gospel, says to the *Jews* ; *You shall seek me, and shall not find me* : Is one of those serious and menacing Truths, which deserves our utmost Attention and Consideration. It seems a Contradiction to what he says in another Place : *Seek and you shall find*, Luke xi. But a little Reflection will perfectly reconcile the seeming Contradiction, and instruct us in one of the most important Lessons delivered in the sacred Oracles. *Seek and you shall find*, says Jesus Christ ; and he being Truth itself cannot deceive us. No, if we do sincerely seek him, we shall undoubtedly find him ; and in him, all we can want or desire : And we may observe that our Blessed Lord says this to his beloved and faithful Disciples, who believed in him, and followed him ; and in them, to all sincere Christians who desire to find him. But when he told the *Jews* they should seek him, and should not find him ; he spoke to those who declared themselves his Enemies ; refused to own him as their Messiah, openly

openly traduced his Doctrine, denied his Miracles, and calumniated his Person. To these he declares, in a just Punishment of their Obstinacy and Infidelity, that they should seek, but not find him : And that they should die in their Sins. Christ is easily found by a sincere Christian, who seeks him, when, and as he ought : But not by a Sinner who never seeks him as he should ; or then only, when it is too late to find him, and when the Crimes of such a one have justly provoked God to withdraw himself, and not to be found. From hence we may easily infer that there is a Time when God may be found ; but we will not seek him ; or in other Words, when he would save us, and we will not be saved. There may also be a Time when we seek him, but shall not be able to find him. That is, we shall desire to be saved, but not desiring it as we ought, and when it is too late, God will not save us. Terrible Truths ! and which ought to make a Sinner tremble.

It may justly seem, as it is, highly injurious to the Majesty of God, and to the Omnipotent Power of the Creator of all Things, to will and desire any Thing ; and that Man, his Creature, the Work of his Hands, should refuse, and will not. Can, or ought such an unworthy Resistance be suffered ? God suffers it, for having created Man a rational Creature, endowed with free Will, it is a Consequence of the Wisdom of God to leave him to the free Exercise of that Liberty he has given him.

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It is evident God desires the Salvation of a Sinner, but the Sinner himself does not sincerely desire it. God thinks on us, but we think not on him. He even condescends to ask us to accept of Salvation; but we, alas! will not accept it. He has done all that could be necessary, on his Part, that we might be saved; but we will do nothing to save ourselves.

There is nothing God desires more earnestly and sincerely than the Salvation of Man. He desires it, as if it concerned himself; and for this St. Paul calls the Salvation of Man *the Riches of the Glory of God*, Ephes. iii. As if to save a Sinner, was a new Acquisition to him. He demands it of us with all possible Tenderness, and in the most endearing Manner. He knocks continually at the Door, he takes not a first, second, or third Denial. He is represented in holy Scriptures as a Lover knocking at the Door of his Beloved, calling upon her, and conjuring her in the most affectionate Terms that Love can inspire, to open the Door and let him in; that he may no longer be exposed to the Inclemency of the Weather. *Open to me, my Sister, my Love, my Dove, because my Head is covered with Dew*, Cant. v. It is thus Jesus Christ sollicitly Sinners, by his Inspirations, and the Motions of his Grace; by the Ministers of his Word, and by good Books. But what Return do Sinners make, they neither mind his Word, nor hearken to his Calls. Their Thoughts are taken up with the Things of this World; and they desire nothing but to enjoy

enjoy the Riches, Honours, and Pleasures of it: And it is too true, that God desires we may be happy with him, but we neither think of it, nor desire it as we ought. If we sometimes drop an Expression, or say, we desire it: Is there any Reason to think us sincere, when we will do nothing to obtain it?

What has not God done for us, and for our Salvation? He became Man for us; he died for us on the Cross to purchase our Redemption; he has established his holy Church, and therein left us all those Mysteries of Grace the holy Sacraments; he has authorized his Ministers to receive in his Name, and to absolve penitent Sinners: he gives us his sacred Body and Blood to strengthen and comfort us; he offers his Grace to help and assist us; and promises an eternal Kingdom to recompense our Fidelity and Perseverance in his Service. So that he may truly say to us, as he did to the *Jews*, heretofore, by the Prophet *Isaias*: *What could I have done more for my Vineyard, and which I have not done*, *Isaias v.* He has done all that can be necessary, on his Part, for our Salvation; but we alas! will do little or nothing for ourselves. This is but too evident, and it is easy to see that all, or the far greatest Part of what we do, is for this World; to raise our Fortunes, aggrandize our Families, and to obtain the Riches and Honour of this Life; for this we labour with

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unwearied Diligence; for this we think no Pains too great, nor too much of our Time taken up. And the Course of our Lives is a clear Proof, that, whatever God has done for us, we are not willing to do any Thing for him, or rather for ourselves: That though he is to be found, we will not seek him, and though he desires we should be happy, we do not sincerely desire it ourselves.

This being so, we have no Reason to wonder at that severe Threat denounced by Jesus Christ against the Jews: *You shall seek me, and you shall not find me.* Since Sinners will not seek God, when he may be found, nor do any Thing for themselves, to secure that Salvation, God has done so much to procure for them, there may be a Time when they will seem to seek him, but shall not find him: When they shall desire to be saved, but not desiring it as they ought, and when it is too late, God will not save them. This is so plainly asserted in holy Scripture, that, however severe it may seem, it is not to be called in Question. This terrible Truth, God thus declares, by the Mouth of the wise Man: *Because I have called, and you have not answered: But have despised my Counsel, and neglected my Admonitions. I also will laugh at your Ruin, and deride you when that which you feared shall come upon you. When a sudden Calamity shall rush upon you. When Trouble and Anguish shall seize you; then shall you call upon me, and I will*

will not hear; you shall rise in the Morning but shall not find me, Prov. i. This is confirmed by the Son of God speaking to the *Jews: You shall die in your Sins.* Deplorable Condition of unfortunate wilful Sinners, who then only seek God when he is not to be found! who defer their Repentance till their last Hours, and when they can sin no longer: When they are obliged to leave all their criminal Enjoyments, to be separated from which causes the Trouble and Sorrow they then express. This is not asserted to invalidate the Sincerity of a Death-bed Repentance, or to maintain that a Sinner cannot be truly converted in his last Hours. God has mercifully granted that Grace to some, and therefore none ought to despair: And we cannot be too late converted, when we are sincerely converted: But then it must also be considered, that for the most Part those late Conversions are not sincere, only apparent, and give but too much Reason to suspect them: And it must be the greatest Folly and Imprudence, to commit an Affair of such Importance, as is eternal Salvation, to the Hazard of a Death-bed Repentance. Those who do, may justly fear, that God will not then be found by them. It is not an easy Matter to seek God, as we ought, when we are dying, if we have refused to seek him before. Alas! if we call upon him then, and he refuses to hear, we are lost, and shall be eternally miserable.

ferable. This he assures us himself; and shall we dare then to run the Hazard, or not seek him while we have proper Time, and he may be found?

If we will consult our Interest as well as our Duty, we shall soon be convinced of the Necessity of repenting in Time, while we have Leisure and Opportunity. For *now is the acceptable Time, now is the Day of Salvation*, 2 Cor. vi. Let us hearken then to the Calls of God, and defer no longer from Day to Day, from one Time to another, lest we come to find no Time, but die in our Sins, and be eternally lost.

ASPIRATIONS.

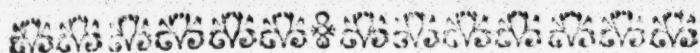
O God, of infinite Mercy and Goodness, who desirest not the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he be converted and live! How long shall Sinners abuse thy Bounty, and refuse to hearken to thee? O strike their Hearts with a wholesome Fear of thee, and thy terrible Judgments, that, before it is too late, they may do Penance for their Sins, and be reconciled to thee. Preserve me, dear Lord, from the Spirit of Delusion, and to believe Lies. Let me not stop my Ears to thy Divine Calls and holy Inspirations. May I now
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seek thee, while thou art to be found, and seek thee in such a Manner as to find thee. Let not the Devil and the World prevail with me, to neglect this great and one Thing necessary. If I have hitherto unhappily gone astray from the true Way, bring me mercifully back again. Open my Eyes to see the Danger my Sins expose me to, that I may, by the Help of thy Grace, timely prevent my Ruin. As thou hast hitherto waited with an incomparable Patience, let me not any longer abuse it? I bow down and adore thy wonderful Goodness, and hope to experience the happy Effects of it. For this, I purpose to amend my Life, and from this Moment to begin to love and serve thee as I ought. From this Moment I will begin to seek thee, and having found thee, may I never more lose thee, by Sin.

Thou hast said, dear Lord, *Seek and you shall find*, Mat. vii. Let me daily seek thee as I ought, and in those Ways wherein thou wilt be found. May I seek thee in the sure Way of Humility, Self-denial, and an ardent Love of thee. Dear Jesus, Saviour of the World! thou desirest to be found by those who thus seek thee, and thou wilt communicate thyself to them. Open my Eyes that I may see my Way, that I may walk in thy Light, that Light which is thy very Self, and by which thou guidest Souls to thee. May I no more wander in Darkness, and run astray from thee. Open my Ears, O

Lord, that I may hear thy sweet and charming Voice, and *run after thee in the Way of thy Commandment*, Psal. 118. May I hearken to thy Calls, and say: *Speak, Lord, for thy Servant heareth*, 1 Kings iii. O speak aloud, that thy Voice may pierce my Ears, touch my Heart, and make me ever obedient and faithful to thee!





T U E S D A Y

In *Passion Week.*The G O S P E L, St. *John* vii. 1.

AFTER these Things Jesus walked in *Galilee*, for he would not walk in *Judea*, because the *Jews* sought to kill him. 2. Now the Feast of the *Jews*, called the Tabernacles, was at Hand. 3. And his Brethren said to him: Pass from hence and go into *Judea*, that thy Disciples also may see the Works which thou dost. 4. For there is no Man that doth any Thing in Secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these Things, make thyself known to the World. 5. For neither did his Brethren believe in him. 6. Then Jesus said to him: My Time is not yet come; but your Time is always ready. 7. The World cannot hate you, but it hateth me:

Because I give Testimony of it, that the Works thereof are Evil. 8. Go you up to this Feast, but I go not up to this Feast: Because my Time is not accomplished. 9. When he had said these Things, he himself staid in *Galilee*. 10. But after his Brethren were gone up, then went he also up to the Feast, not openly, but as it were in Secret. 11. The *Jews* then sought for him at the Feast, and said: where is he? 12. And much Murmuring there was among the Multitude, concerning him; for some said: He is a good Man: Others said, no; but he seduceth the People. 13. Yet no Man spoke openly of him, for Fear of the *Jews*.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

The Feast of the Tabernacles, of which Mention is made in this Gospel, was one of the principal Solemnities of the *Jews*, and was observed seven Days together, during which they were obliged to dwell under Tents, or Arbours made of the Boughs of Trees, as an annual Memorial of their Forefathers having lived under Tents forty Years in the Desert; and to give God Thanks for bringing them into the Land of Promise. At this Festival our Blessed Saviour was present, being very exact in observing all the established Festivals of the *Jewish* Institute, or the Law of *Moses*, then in Force and not abrogated. As this Feast of Tabernacles was instituted, for a Memorial

morial to the *Jews* of their Passage through the Desert, and their having lived there forty Years before they entered the Land of *Canaan*; so, from our Blessed Lord's being present at it, we may draw a very useful and instructive Moral, to look upon ourselves as Strangers and Pilgrims, passing through the Desert of this World, and marching towards the heavenly *Canaan*, the true Land of Promise, and in that Quality to esteem ourselves as having no fixed or permanent Habitation, according to what *St. Paul* says: *Here we have not a permanent City, but we seek that which is to come*, Heb. xiii. Consequently to this every Christian ought to have a Contempt of, and Detachment from the Things of this World; and an ardent Desire to arrive at the Place he is bound for. This is what may be observed in all Travellers, who do not fix their Affections and Desires upon what they behold in passing by; but have their Thoughts chiefly occupied about their arriving at their Journey's End.

The great Reason why the Christian Traveller ought to despise and condemn the Things of this World, is, that every Thing in it is changeable and transitory; nothing durable or lasting. The World itself, the great Theatre of so many surprising Changes and Revolutions passes away, it grows every Day older, and nearer its End, when it shall be consumed in a general Conflagration; and though we are willing to suppose it a great Way off, that

many Years, perhaps Ages may pass before it arrives; yet we know not how soon it may come. We know neither the Day, nor the Hour, *Matt. xxv.* only that it will be, and perhaps sooner than we imagine. The determinate Time when, God reserves to himself, and that out of his wise Dispensation, for our Benefit, that ignorant as we are, when the End of the World will come, yet knowing that one Time or other, it will be, we may look upon it with a Traveller's Eye, as a Thing passing, more deserving our Contempt than Esteem. But if the World itself is thus transitory, and only to last for a Time, the Goods and Possessions of it, that share of them which we enjoy are much more so; and therefore we have little Reason to be fond of, or be attached to them. The Estates and Riches that we are at present Masters of, we may, in a little Time be deprived of. A thousand Accidents to which we are exposed, may take them from us, and cause a strange Alteration in our Fortune. How many rich, in a little Time, suddenly become miserably poor! How many poor, as suddenly, oftentimes, grow rich? Nothing is more uncertain; nothing less durable than Riches. Are Pleasures and Diversions more stable and lasting? Nothing less. The following of them is generally attended with many vexatious and troublesome Disappointments; and are so subject to Mutability and Change, that with a great Deal of Justice and Truth, the wise Man calls them, and every Thing

Thing else in this World, *Vanity of Vanities*, Eccles. i. Of this Truth we may have further Confirmation from ourselves; for what are our Bodies but Houses of Clay, every Moment in Danger of falling? Nothing is more uncertain and precarious than Health, which Sickness may soon deprive us of, and without Health what are all the Enjoyments of this World? Nothing more uncertain and precarious than Life, which we may lose by a thousand sudden and unforeseen Accidents. From hence it is evident, that we are in this World, only as Travellers, and ought not to fix our Affections on any Thing in it. Our Bodies are but as so many Tents, or Tabernacles wherein our Souls reside, during our Stay here, in like Manner, as the *Jews* dwelt in Tents during their Passage through the Desert, into *Canaan*. Happy those Christians, who, filled with these Sentiments, seek not with Attachment the Things of this World, but look upon it only as a great Inn, wherein they lodge by the Way and refresh themselves in their Journey to Heaven, where they earnestly desire to arrive that they may enjoy God and be happy for ever.

This continual Desire of, and tending to Heaven, is another Part of the Character of a Christian Traveller, and makes him continually breathe the Language of such a one. Insensible, in a great Measure to the Things of this World, which are more the Objects of his Dislike than Desires, he looks upon them with
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Indifferency and Contempt, he incessantly sighs after what he seeks, and in a holy Impatience cries out: *When shall I come, and appear in the Presence of God*, Psal. xli. *Woe is me, that my Sojourn is prolonged! that I am forced to dwell in the Tents of Kedar*, Psal. cxix. These are the pious Breathings of holy Souls, and express a true Notion both of this and the other World. Oh, that these Notions were so deeply fixed in our Minds, that they might have a due Influence on our Practice! That our Lives might be regulated by them, and that we would seriously labour for this truly desirable Happiness! For it is not bare wishing, or desiring that will bring us there, no more than wishing will bring a Traveller to his Journey's End. We must not only desire Heaven, but labour and take Pains for it. It is proposed to us, as a Reward and Recompence for what we do; so that if we will not work, we have no Right to expect any Wages. What we must do, Christ tells, when he says: *If you will enter into Life, keep the Commandments*, Matt. xix. On these Terms only we can hope to obtain it. To our Desires then, let us join our Endeavours, and *strive by good Works to make our Calling and Election sure*, 2 Pet. i. If we do, we shall find our Labours will not be in vain, and that Heaven is a Recompence worth all our Pains.

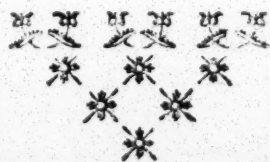
A S P I R A T I O N S.

O God, I do sincerely desire to obtain eternal Life; and for this, I purpose to serve thee, and keep thy Commandments. Thou hast said I must do so, if I will gain Heaven and eternal Happiness; I embrace with Pleasure the Conditions thou proposest, for I desire nothing more than to be with thee. I contemn and despise this World, and every Thing in it, as not worth my Care or Concern. If I have not hitherto observed thy Commands, as I ought, I am truly sorry, and beg Pardon. I purpose to be more careful for the future. I am here only as a Passenger, and such I will esteem myself, nor set my Mind and Affections on any Thing here. All my Desires shall tend towards thee, and all my Endeavours be to arrive at the Enjoyment of thee, for in thee only I can be happy, and without thee shall be eternally miserable.

Ah my Soul! why do we loiter here, and busy ourselves about empty Nothings? Heaven is our Home. Thither we are bound; and thither let us bend our Course with all the Speed we can. What is this but a wretched sorry Inn, wherein if we are obliged to lodge and rest for a Time, it is not our Dwelling Place, nor must we look upon it as such. O my God! the great End for which I am made, I will seek thee, and tend to thee only. Alas! I have hitherto been too careless and negligent.

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I have unprofitably lost a great Deal of Time, but let me for the future be more diligent. Adieu, vain World, I renounce to all that you can give. I seek for and am bound to a better Place, Heaven, where I hope to see and enjoy my God for ever. Courage then, O my Soul! let us go on with Resolution and Constancy. Let us so run as to obtain the glorious Prize. My God! it is what I desire, help me with thy Grace that I may happily succeed.





W E D N E S D A Y

In Passion Week.

The GOSPEL, St. *John* v. 22.

AND it was the Feast of the Dedication, at *Jerusalem*; and it was the Winter Season. 23. And Jesus walked in the Temple, in *Solomon's* Porch. 24. The *Jews* then came round about him, and said to him: How long dost thou hold our Minds in Suspence? If thou be Christ, tell us plainly. 25. Jesus answered them; I tell you, and you believe not: The Works which I do in the Name of my Father, they give Testimony of me. 26. But you do not believe, because you are not of my Sheep. 27. My Sheep hear my Voice: And I know them and they follow me. 28. And I give them Life everlasting: And they shall not perish for ever. And no Man shall pluck them

them out of my Hands. 29. That which my Father hath given me, is greater than all: And no Man can snatch them out of my Father's Hands. 30. I and the Father are one. 31. The *Jews* then took up Stones to stone him. 32. *Jesus* said to them: Many good Works have I shewn to you from my Father; for which of those Works do you stone me? 33. The *Jews* answered him: For a good Work we stone thee not, but for Blasphemy; and because that thou being Man, makest thyself God. 34. *Jesus* made answer: Is it not written in your Law; I have said, you are Gods? 35. If he called those Gods, to whom the Word of God was spoken: And the Scriptures cannot be made void! 36. Do you say of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the World, thou blasphemest: Because I said, I am the Son of God? 37. If I do not the Works of my Father, believe me not. 38. But if I do, though you will not believe me, believe the Works, that you may know, and believe that the Father is in me, and I in the Father. 39. They sought therefore to take him, but he escaped out of their Hands.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

If Christ told the *Jews* they did not believe in him, because they were not of his Sheep; the same may be said of many who call themselves Christians, who do not believe in him
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with a right Faith, and are not of his Fold. *My Sheep*, says Jesus Christ, *hear my Voice, and I know them, and they follow me.* Whoever therefore that does not hear the Voice of Christ, and follow him, are none of his Sheep, nor belong to him. This, though it may seem severe, is a serious Truth; and the Reason is here given by Truth itself. But who are those Christians who may be said not to hear the Voice of Christ? And how can they, who boast of that Character, not belong to him; or not be of his Sheep? The Answer to these Questions may be easily given. First, they are not of his Sheep who do not hear his Voice, nor follow him in the Observance of what he commands, in the practical Part of the Gospel. There are too many, who believe all the Truths of the Gospel in Speculation, but in their Practice condemn them; and choosing to walk in the Ways of Sin, cannot be said to follow Christ, and therefore are not of his Sheep, nor belong to him. There are others, who, tho' they call themselves Christians, yet are not of his Fold, because they refuse to hear his Voice, speaking to them by his Church, but rejecting her Authority, separate themselves from his Sheep, and by so doing, belong not to him. This he has sufficiently declared by saying: *He who will not hear the Church, let him be esteemed as a Heathen and Publican*, Matt. xviii. And of the Pastors of this Church, he says: *He who despises you, despises me; and he who despises me, despises him that sent me*, Luke x. A plain
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Indication of his Will that we should hear the Church and submit to her Authority. When we show this submissive and respectful Docility, in obeying her, we then give a very good Proof that we are of his Sheep; but when we fail in that, there is very great Reason to affirm, we do not belong to him. The sad Case of all those who separate from her Communion and refuse to submit to her Authority.

To understand this, we may consider that nothing is more necessary, more just, and more glorious than, by a Submission of Judgment, to obey the Church, and thereby to hear the Voice of Jesus Christ speaking to us by her. Nothing can be more necessary, since it is the positively declared Will of God, we should do so; and without it, we shall find it impossible to direct ourselves, with any Security, in the Way of Salvation. Without this Light of Faith and Submission, we shall fall into strange Errors. Had it not been necessary, Christ would never have obliged us to hear the Church, under the severe Penalty of being counted as Heathens and Publicans. For which Reason, the inspired Apostle bids us obey our Bishops and Pastors, as those who are placed over us to watch for the Good of our Souls, *Heb. xiii.* After this so plain Declaration, to refuse to obey, is a Sign of very great Pride, and an unbounded Love of Liberty to do as we please. Qualifications which will never entitle us to be of the Number of Christ's Sheep, or to belong to him. If we reflect that nothing is
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more subject to Errors and Mistakes, than the Minds of Men; and consider into how many absurd and extravagant Opinions many great and learned Men have fallen, by trusting to themselves, and refusing to submit their Judgments to that of the Church; and the fatal Consequences to thousands of Souls, in the many Schisms it has caused, and Heresies it has produced, this alone will demonstrate the Necessity of hearing and obeying the Church when she speaks, and to acknowledge her the true, proper, and final Judge of Controversies that may arise in Regard of what Christians are to believe and practise, or what not. This is further confirmed from the Nature of all Bodies politick, wherein some, as Heads and Rulers, are to govern and direct; others as Members, to follow and obey. Such is the Nature of the Church, as a spiritual Body politick, wherein it is impossible to preserve Peace and Union, or to avoid Schisms and Divisions, if every one may set up for a Guide to himself, and reject her Authority over him. Of such Christ justly says they are not of his Sheep, who are all one, *Ephes. iv.* preserving the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace, by following him, and obeying the Pastors of the Church, especially the chief visible Head, and supream Pastor of it. Whoever refuse this, are no other than Wolves in Sheep's Cloathing, whose only Aim is to draw unwary Sheep from Christ's Fold, and thereby devour them. The only Security against such is to stick close and firm to the *Faith once delivered*

livered to the Saints, Jude iii. and not, his Children, be blown about by every Wind of Doctrine, Ephes. iv.

Nothing can be more just and reasonable than this Submission; for Prudence will certainly dictate to us, in a Matter of the highest Concern, and wherein we may fail to take the surest and safest Method of acting. By hearing and obeying the Church in spiritual Matters, we are certain of not running any Risque; and that she neither can, nor will lead us into Error. Christ promised to her his holy Spirit to lead and guide her into all Truth, *John xvi.* that he would be with her to the End of the World, *Matt. xxviii.* and build her upon a Rock, that the Gates of Hell should never prevail against her, *Matt. xvi.* Hence she is called, by the Apostle, *the Pillar and Ground of Truth. 1 Tim. iii.* All which being no Ways consistent with her falling into damnable Errors, or teaching Falshoods for Truth, shows the great Weakness of those who alledge in Defence of a causeless Separation, that she has erred, or may err in Matters of Faith. It likewise demonstrates the Security and Safety, together with the Peace of Mind, to be obtained by submitting to her Authority, while those who separate from her are divided among themselves; have no certain Rule to go by, or where to fix, but wander on, led by the blind Guide of private Judgment, and so lose themselves in the endless Mazes of Error and Mistakes.

If it is thus safe to submit to the Authority of the Church, it is likewise glorious for a Christian so to do; as thereby exercising the most heroick Virtues, recommended in the Gospel, and to which the most glorious Remcompence is promised. We exercise thereby, Faith, Humility, and Obedience. Faith, in believing what God declares by his Church: Humility, by submitting our Judgment to her's; and Obedience, in complying with what she requires of us. Excellent Virtues, and sure Marks that we are of Christ's Sheep, and belong to his Fold. Of such he says: *I know them, and they follow me; and I give to them Life everlasting.* How glorious is it thus to follow Christ, and to be known by him! And from hence we may observe the Happiness of being Members of the Catholic Church, and thereby belonging to the Fold of Christ. A great Blessing, and will be so to us, if, like good Sheep, we truly follow him our Pastor, hear his Voice, and do what he commands us, in living up to the Principles of our most holy Religion, without which our Faith will be in vain, for *Faith without Works is dead*, Jac. ii. We must not deceive ourselves, and think it enough, that we are of Christ's Sheep, by being Members of his Church, and take no further Care how, or in what Manner, we live, lest, when we knock and say: *Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy Name*, Matt. vii. The Answer be: *I know you not; depart from me you Workers of Iniquity.* To a sound and orthodox Faith must be joined
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a virtuous and holy Life, and it is, not only in Regard of our Principles, but likewise of our Morals, that Christ says to us: *My Sheep hear my Voice and follow me.*

A S P I R A T I O N S.

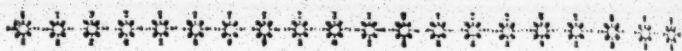
Blessed for ever be thy Name, O Saviour of the World, who hast established thy Church, as a sure and certain Way by which we may come to thee. Thou hast founded her upon a Rock, and the Gates of Hell shall never prevail against her. We give thee Thanks for the Happiness we enjoy, by being in her Communion. She is that City set upon a Hill, and which cannot be hid. O draw all Nations to her. Bring back all those who are gone astray, and have unhappily divided themselves from her. Remove all Prejudices and worldly Views, which so much hinder that blessed Peace and Union, which ought to join those, who pretend to follow thee. Give Grace to all the Members of thy Church, to live up to the Purity of the Faith they profess, and never to dishonour it by wicked Lives, but, like good Sheep, to hear thy Voice, and follow thee in the Observance of thy holy Commands, that so they may obtain Life everlasting.

My God! I give thee Thanks for the Favour thou hast done me, in making me a Member of thy One, Holy, Catholic Church. To this Favour, dear Lord, add one more, and give me Grace to live up to the Holiness of that Faith

Faith I profess. May I never dishonour this holy Faith, by a wicked and unholy Life. May I endeavour to adorn it by a suitable holy Life and Conversation. It is my Happiness, O Jesus, the Bishop and Shepherd of Souls, to be one of thy Sheep, may I always hear thy Voice and follow thee. Let not the Voice of Strangers sound in my Ears, nor draw me from thee, nor from the Society of the faithful Members of thy mystical Body the Church. In her Faith may I live, and in her holy Communion may I die; and for her holy Faith let me be always ready and willing by thy Grace, to lay down my Life, and lose all that I have. Amen, Amen.



THURSDAY



T H U R S D A Y

In Passion Week.

The G O S P E L, St. Luke vii. 36.

AND one of the *Pharisees* desired him, that he would eat with him. And he went into the *Pharisee's* House, and sat down to eat. 37. And behold a Woman that was in the City, a Sinner, as soon as she knew that he was at Table in the *Pharisee's* House, brought an Alabaster-box of Ointment. 38. And standing behind at his Feet, she began to wash his Feet with Tears, and wiped them with the Hairs of her Head, and kissed his Feet, and anointed them with Ointment. 39. Which the *Pharisee* seeing, who had invited him, said within himself: This Man if he were a Prophet, would doubtless know, who, and what Man-
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ner of Woman she is, that touched him; that she is a Sinner. 40. And Jesus answering, said to him: *Simon* I have something to say to thee. He replied: Master say it. 41. A certain Creditor had two Debtors, the one owed him five hundred Pence, the other fifty. 42. And they not having wherewith to pay, he forgave them both: Which therefore of the two loveth him most? 43. *Simon* answered and said: I suppose that he to whom he forgave most. And he said to him: Thou hast judged rightly. 44. And turning to the Woman, he said to *Simon*, Dost thou see this Woman? I came into thy House, thou didst not give me Water for my Feet; but she hath watered my Feet with her Tears, and hath wiped them with her Hair. 45. Thou gavest me no Kifs; but she, since she came in, hath not ceased to kiss my Feet. 46. Thou hast not anointed my Head with Oil; but she has anointed my Feet with Ointment. 47. Wherefore I say to thee, many Sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much: But to whom less is forgiven, he loveth less. 48. And he said to her: Thy Sins are forgiven thee. 49. And they who were at Table with him, began to say within themselves: Who is this that forgiveth Sins also? 50. And he said to the Woman: Thy Faith hath saved thee; go in Peace.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

This Gospel gives us a different Idea of three different Persons; the penitent *S. Magdalen*; the proud, censorious *Pharisee*, and the merciful Redeemer of Mankind. *St. Mary Magdalen* doing Penance for her Sins. The *Pharisee* censuring the Behaviour of her, and our Blessed Saviour justifying her. In *St. Mary Magdalen* we may behold an illustrious Example of a sincere Conversion; in the *Pharisee* a Picture of Pride and Arrogance; in our Blessed Lord, a perfect Image of Bounty and Meekness wherewith he receives all Sinners whom a true Repentance brings to him. This is the Gospel epitomized, and an excellent Subject for our pious Reflections.

The Scripture is silent as to the particular Crimes of *St. Mary Magdalen*; but from what is said of her, in this Gospel, it is the general Conjecture that she lived in public Disorders. Whatever her Sins were, they concern us less to know, than to consider, and imitate her sincere Conversion. This is worthy of our serious Attention, and therein we may observe two Things, which, as necessary Conditions, ought to accompany our Conversions, and without which there will be great Reason to question their Sincerity.

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First, *St. Mary Magdalen's Conversion* was prompt, and without Delays, or Put-Offs. She no sooner understood that our Saviour was in the House of the *Psarisee*, but immediately she repaired thither. She did not defer to another Time. She let no human Considerations hinder her from going; nor was in any Concern what the World would say of her. These Motives had no Weight with her, desirous to be freed from the sad State she was in, she lays aside all other Considerations, and boldly enters the House; and going into the Room where Christ was, flings herself at his Feet, and washes them with her penitential Tears, wipes them with the Hairs of her Head, and kisses them with all the Ardour of sincere Love and Affection, in Testimony of which she anoints them with the precious Ointment of Spikenard, and filled the Room with the sweet Odour of it. Admirable Proofs of a true and sincere Conversion! Those Things which had nourished her Vanity, and contributed to her Sins; she now makes the Instruments of Penance, and public Proofs of that Change Grace had wrought in her. Those Eyes which had been as fuel to unlawful Amours, she even drowns in Tears. Those Tresses which had served to set off her Beauty, and been a Snare to captivate the Hearts of the Unwary, she has now no other Regard to, than with them to wipe the Feet of Jesus. Her precious Ointment profusely spent heretofore upon herself, and to heighten her Charms, is now more worthily

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bestowed upon him to whom she has Recourse, as her only Physician, to cure her disordered Soul. Would to God, those who are too apt to imitate the Vanity and criminal Follies of this holy Penitent, could be perswaded to imitate the Promptness and Sincerity of her Repentance, which was thus prompt and ready, and was also constant and lasting. Certain Proofs of its being sincere. Having quitted the Ways of Sin, she no more returned to those dangerous Paths. As the Love of God was the principal Motive of her Conversion: That Love kept her constant and faithful to him who had thus mercifully forgiven her. Excellent Model for us to copy after! Let us imitate this illustrious Penitent, and, with her, hasten to fling ourselves at the Feet of Jesus. Let no worldly Views or human Motives, of what the World or others will say of us, make us delay or put off our Conversion. Let us deplore and weep for our Sins; let us sacrifice and give up whatever has been to us an Occasion of sinning, and by a future Fidelity to God prove the Sincerity of our Repentance and Conversion.

But, if in the Person of St. *Mary Magdalen* we behold a rare Example of sincere Repentance; in the Conduct of the *Pharisee* we may see a true Picture of Pride and Arrogance. A Representation of those false Devotees, who conceited of themselves, and their own Virtues, take the Liberty to censure and condemn others. These are justly condemned in the

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Reproof Christ gave to the *Pharisee*, who immediately judged our Saviour was no Prophet, nor knew St. *Mary Magdalen* was a Sinner, because he permitted her to touch him. This rash Judgment concerning our Saviour proceeded from a Pride and Conceit the *Pharisee* had of himself: And our blessed Lord's Reply showed how much he was in the wrong, and may teach us never to judge by outward Appearances only, as being deceitful Rules to go by. Before we pass our Judgment, we should carefully examine the Nature and Circumstances both of Persons and Things. Had the *Pharisee* considered that Christ, in Quality of Saviour, came to seek and save that which was lost; and that it was not the Whole and Sound, but the Sick and Infirm who needed a Physician, he would have found no Reason to have censured our Blessed Lord, nor to have contemned the poor Penitent at his Feet. Here we have an admirable Lesson not to contemn or despise any one on Account of their being great Sinners. Rather let us pity and pray for them: And if we are not guilty of the same Crimes, confess it not to be of ourselves, but of the Grace of God, which Grace can soon cause a Change in the greatest Sinner, and make him a great Saint. As no Sinner ought himself to despair of Mercy, so no one ought to condemn any Sinner, and give him up absolutely for lost. The Mercy of God is infinite, and he calls Sinners at all Times, as at all Times he is willing and ready to receive them; of this the

Conduct of Jesus Christ, in this Gospel, is a clear and evident Demonstration.

The *Pharisee* at the same Time that he censured our Saviour, condemned the Penitent, *Magdalen*, but our Lord espoused her Cause, and by defending her, showed that admirable Bounty and Meekness we can never enough admire. He could have justly condemned her, for the Enormity of her Crimes, and the Disorders of her Life; but he had more Regard to the Tears she had shed at his Feet, her Humility and Repentance. If his Justice had been provoked by one, his Mercy was moved by the other. As he knew the Secrets of all Hearts, he saw her's touched with sincere Sorrow and Contrition. He saw her criminal Love of the World, changed into an ardent fervent Love for him. If she had sinned, and offended him much, she now loved him more. This moved him to pity and pardon her. He takes no Notice of the *Pharisee's* rash Judgment of him, that he was not a Prophet; and by an admirable Similitude, justified the Notice he had taken of her. Having pardoned her Sins, he said to her: *Thy Faith hath saved thee: Go in Peace.* This Bounty and Meekness of our Saviour, we ought to imitate especially in Regard of those, who have offended us. A harsh and vindictive Spirit is far from that Meekness and Charity, which is the distinguished Character of a true Disciple and Follower of Christ.

A S P I R A T I O N S.

All thy Actions, O Saviour of the World, are so many admirable Lessons to us. How long then, O my God! shall I be insensible to the Example thou hast set me? It is thy Grace that must make me more docile, and enable me to practise what thou teachest. That infinite Bounty and Goodness thou didst show to the penitent *Magdalen*, is not exhausted, it is still the same to all who sincerely desire it. Have then the same Compassion for me thou hadst for her. Inspire me with the same Sentiments of sincere Sorrow for my Sins, and Love of thee. Happy, if by my Prayers and Tears, I may obtain to hear from thee: *Thy Sins are forgiven thee*. I acknowledge that I have offended much, and that my Sins are many. May thy Grace work in me a sincere and thorough Conversion, that from this Moment I may love thee much, and never offend thee any more.

May I love thee, thou dear compassionate Saviour of Sinners. May I love thee with my whole Heart, may I love thee above all other Things, and all other Things only in thee and for thee. O that I could love thee as I ought, and as thou deservest! O that my Heart might burn in seraphick Flames of Love! How great Reason have I to love thee much, dear Jesus, thou who hast loved me more? If Love de-

erves Love, how ought I to love thee, who daily givest me so many Proofs of thy boundless Love: Thy Love makes thee bear with my Miseries and Ingratitudes. Thy Love makes thee to pardon my Sins, and daily to heap thy Favours upon me. Burn, O my Soul! burn O my Heart! with Love of a Saviour so loving, so good, and so beneficent. O God of Love! fill my Heart and my Soul with a most ardent and constant Love of thee. May I love thee to the last Moment of my Life, and be one Day happy in the eternal Enjoyment of thee.



FRIDAY



F R I D A Y

In *Passion Week.*The G O S P E L, St. *John* xi. 47.

THE Chief Priests therefore, and the *Pharisees* assembled a Council, and said: What do we, for this Man doth many Miracles? 48. If we let him alone so, all will believe in him; and the *Romans* will come and take away our Place and our Nation. 49. But one of them named *Caiphas*, being the High Priest that Year, said to them: You know nothing. 50. Neither do you consider that it is expedient for you that one Man should die for the People, and that the whole Nation perish not. 51. And thus he spoke not of himself: But being the High Priest of that Year, he prophesied, that Jesus should die for the Nation. 52. And not only for that Nation, but to gather together in one the Children of God, that were dispersed.

perfed. From that Day therefore they deviled to put him to Death.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

Never was any Folly greater than that of the Chief Priests and *Pharifees*, as related in this Gospel, who confulted together in Order to put Jesus Chrift to Death. To acknowledge his Miracles and the Power which wrought them, and not to imagine, that he, who had delivered others, and raifed them from the Dead, could deliver himfelf out of their Hand, fhews that though their Malice was great, yet their Judgment was but fmall. The Folly of them is an excellent Representation of the Folly of too many in thefe Days. They met and confulted how to put our Bleffed Saviour to Death, and the Motive of their Confult was a Thought of their own Prefervation, and a needlefs Fear of being deftroyed. *If we let this Man alone, fay they, every one will believe in him; and the Romans will come and take away our Place and Nation.* Their Care was only for the Prefent; and their Fears, left they fhould lofe their temporal Poffeffions. They thought not of the Future, nor of a fpiritual Kingdom; and thus exercifing their Wifdom and Prudence about improper Objects, and in a wrong Way, they fuffered in both Refpects. They loft their temporal Kingdom, and were excluded that of Jesus Chrift. The *Romans*, as Minifters of God's Juftice, came and deftroyed

stroyed their City, and ruined their Nation, and they have ever since been a Vagabond Race, dispersed over all Parts of the World. It were to be wished their Conduct was not imitated, by many who call themselves Christians; and among whom there are Numbers who seem to have no further Care than for the Present, for the Things of this World, and think the Future, those of the other World, not worth any serious Thought or Concern. This is that worldly Wisdom, which the Apostle condemns, and declares to be an Enemy to God, 1 Cor. iii. and is in itself a Folly, altogether as extravagant as that of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, and will be attended with the same fatal Consequences. Whereas the true Wisdom of a Christian, and that which the Gospel teaches, is not only to consider the Present, what may please us now; but to look back upon the past, and to provide for the Future. To consider these three different Parts of Time, will teach us to understand the sad Loss of past Time ill spent; the Necessity of managing well the Present, and the indispenfable Duty of providing for the Future. In this consists that true Wisdom which comes from above, and which the Apostle St. *James* directs to ask of the Father of Lights, from whom alone every good and perfect Gift proceeds, *James* i.

By reflecting on past Time, and the Records of it, as contained in the sacred Oracles, we understand that sad Complaint of lost Sinners: *What has our Pride profited us? Or what have*

have our Riches availed us? We have erred from the Truth, and the Light of Justice has not shined to us, Sap. v. By thus turning our Eyes backwards, we may discover the little Profit we have reaped from that Time we have mispent, and which it is impossible to recover, or call back. Time once past and lost, is forever lost. All the Wealth of the *Indies* cannot purchase, or bring back one single Minute of it. This is enough to convince us of the Wisdom of looking backwards, and beholding thereby what we have gained, or rather what we have lost; since whatever we have done if not to our spiritual Good, has been, in Reality, doing nothing to the Purpose. For can we say, we are one Jot the better for past idle Diversions, vain Amusements, or criminal Pleasures? Can the Thoughts of our past Negligence in our Christian Duty, be of any Comfort? Or do not the Thoughts of it fill us with Regret and Apprehension? If we do not think of it, or endeavour to put such Reflection out of our Minds, do we not then stand in our own Light, and hinder ourselves from profiting by what might be of infinite Advantage to us, in putting us upon taking such Measures as might make up our Loss, by being more careful of the Present, and cautious for the Future?

As the present Time is that of which every Moment is a Monument of Mercy; and allowed us by the Goodness of God to prepare for Eternity, it must be an Argument of the
greatest

greatest Folly and Stupidity, to neglect or mis-employ those precious Moments; as it is true Wisdom to employ them well. Had we nothing to do in this World, but to eat, drink and divert ourselves; such a Life would have nothing culpable in it. If we were created only for the Enjoyments of this Life; an unwearied Pursuit after the Riches, Honours, and Pleasures of the World, might be very justifiable. But, how contrary is such a Notion to what our holy Religion teaches us! We are taught to profess and believe that our only and great End is to love and serve God here, that we may be happy with him hereafter. For this is our present Time granted; and this End is not to be obtained, but by a right Use of our Time, in the Discharge of those Duties required of us by God. To this may be added the Shortness and Uncertainty of the present Time, which every Moment slips by us, and passes away. So that we can call no Part of it our own, but the present Moments we enjoy. The Past is no more, the Future not in our Power, nor can we with any Certainty depend upon it. Only the Present is what we can make Use of, and that no longer than while we actually enjoy it. It must be confessed then, the Height of Folly and Rashness not to make a right Use of it, while it is in our Power to do so; and the best Proof we can give of our Wisdom and Prudence, is to be careful of it, and so wisely to manage it, as to secure and provide well for the Future, which comes on fast.

Hence

Hence that true Saying: *This Life is but a Moment, but on this Moment Eternity depends.*

Does not this deserve the most serious Consideration of a Christian? His Life is but a Moment, which passes away like a Shadow; he is daily and hourly hastening towards the End of it, and which will be followed by an endless, happy, or miserable Eternity. What can be Folly and Madness, if to neglect and provide for Eternity be not so? Can there be a more powerful or perswasive Motive than this, to make us wise in Time, and to provide for the Future? Good God! I have only a few uncertain Minutes here, and I know my eternal Happiness or Misery depends upon the good or bad Use I make of them; and shall I not be careful how I employ them, be cautious how I mispend them? Ah! let this Consideration touch our Hearts in Time, lest being Fools now, and only regarding the Present, we come to be wise hereafter, at our own Cost, and when it is too late. If we neglect this useful Advice, and please ourselves in our Folly now; we shall one Day be made wiser, but, alas! that Wisdom then will be a cruel Addition to our Punishment. Then the Past, Present, and Future, will be continually before our Eyes. The past Time ill spent will be a constant afflicting Subject to us. The present Punishment will torment us without ceasing; and the Prospect of a future never ending Misery will overwhelm us with Despair. This is the sad Condition of Thousands who have died in their Folly, and
will

will be the Lot of all those who follow their Example. If we have any Regard then for our eternal Salvation, and desire not to share in their Misery, let us not here share in their Madness, but wisely consider the past Time, to correct our past Errors; prudently manage the Present while it is in our Power, and so provide for the Future, as to secure our Salvation, and be eternally happy.

A S P I R A T I O N S.

O God, the bountiful Author and Giver of Time! make me to comprehend and understand the true Value of those precious Moments thou art pleased to bestow upon me. Great is thy Goodness, Lord, to bear with me, and allow me Time to prepare for Eternity. O let me not abuse thy Bounty, by mispending and abusing my Time! Teach me that true Wisdom, whereby I may learn the Difference between Time and Eternity; between the present transitory Things of this World, and the lasting Ones of the other. May it be the Effect of thy Grace, that I so carefully improve the Present, as wisely to provide for the Future. May I now endeavour to redeem the Time that I have lost, and from this Moment begin to serve thee as I ought, and make my best Advantages of what remains: And may no Part of my Life hereafter pass away idly, or unprofitably, but be spent in doing thy Will, and preparing for Eternity. For this I beg thy Help and Assistance,

sistance, for without thy Help, O Lord, I can do nothing.

O my Soul! let us look upon Time as the most precious of all Things here! Time is given us to prepare for Eternity: And shall we foolishly squander it away in Sin and Folly? Deliver me, O God, from so wretched a Madness, and make me rightly to value, and wisely to improve every Moment of my Time, to answer thy gracious Ends in bestowing it upon me. My Time, alas! will soon be at an End, and will be followed by an endless, happy, or miserable Eternity. If I will be wise then to Salvation, I must spend my Time well, and in the Service of my God; and in what can I spend it better? O bounteous Giver of Time, every Moment of which is a Monument of thy Mercy. May every Moment of my Time be dedicated to the Love of thee. It is too precious to be misused, to be lost or profaned by sinful Employments. All my Hours, my Days and Years, I give and consecrate to thee, my God, that by this short Time I may pass to a happy endless Eternity.

SATUR-

Ἡμέρα τῆς ἑβδομάτης τῆς ἑσχάτης

S A T U R D A Y

In Passion Week.

The G O S P E L, St. *John* xii. 10.

AND the Chief Priests consulted how they might also kill *Lazarus*. 11. Because many of the *Jews*, by Reason of him, went away and believed in *Jesus*. 12. And on the next Day, a great Multitude that was come to the Feast, when they heard that *Jesus* was going to *Jerusalem*. 13. They took the Boughs of Palm-trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried: *Hosanna, Blessed is he who cometh in the Name of the Lord, the King of Israel*. 14. And *Jesus* found a young Ass, and sat upon it, as it is written. 15. Fear not, Daughter of *Sion*, behold thy King cometh sitting upon the Colt of an Ass. 16. These

These Things the Disciples understood not at first; but when *Jesus* was glorified, then they remembered that those Things were written of him, and that these Things they did to him.

17. The Multitude therefore bore Testimony which was with him when he called *Lazarus* out of the Grave, and raised him from the Dead. 18. It was for this Reason also, that the Multitude came to meet him; because they heard that he had done this Miracle. 19. The *Pharisees* then said one to another: Do you see that we prevail nothing? Behold the whole World is gone after him. 20. Now there were certain *Gentiles* among them, who were come to adore on the Festival Day. 21. These therefore came to *Philip*, who was of *Betsaida* and *Gaulilee*, and desired him, saying: Sir, we would see *Jesus*. 22. *Philip* cometh and telleth *Andrew*, again *Andrew* and *Philip* told *Jesus*. 23. And *Jesus* answered them, saying: The Hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified. 24. Amen, Amen, I say unto you, unless a Grain of Wheat falling into the Ground die: 25. Itself remaineth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much Fruit. He that loveth his Life, shall lose it: And he that hateth his Life in this World, keepeth it unto Life everlasting. 26. If any one minister to me, let him follow me: and where I am, there also shall he be that ministereth to me: If any Man minister to me, my Father will honour him. 27. Now is my Soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father save me

from

from this Hour; but for this Cause I came unto this Hour. 28. Father, glorify thy Name. A Voice came from Heaven, saying: I have both glorified it, and I will glorify it again. 29. The Multitude therefore that stood and heard, said it thundered. Others said: An Angel spoke to him. 30. *Jesus* answered and said: This Voice came not because of me, but for your Sake. 31. Now is the Judgment of the World: Now the Prince of the World shall be cast forth. 32. And I, if I be lifted up from the Earth, will draw all Things to myself. 33. Now this he said, signifying what Death he should die. 34. The Multitude answered him: We have heard out of the Law, that Christ abideth for ever, and how sayest thou, that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is the Son of Man? 35. *Jesus* therefore said to them: Yet a little while, the Light is among you, walk whilst you have the Light, that the Darknes overtake you not: And he that walks in Darknes, knows not whither he goeth. 36. While you have the Light, believe in the Light, that you may be the Children of Light. These Things *Jesus* spoke, and he went, and hid himself from them.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

To love one's Life, and by that to lose it: To hate one's Life, and thereby to save it, are seemingly surprising Contradictions; strange Paradoxes; yet, in this Gospel, declared true by Jesus Christ himself. The *Jews* had for some Time meditated with themselves how to apprehend our Blessed Lord, and put him to Death. They now had resolved upon it, and also to kill *Lazarus*, whom he had raised from the Dead, because, on Account of him, many of them believed in Christ. This Design of theirs was not hid from our Saviour, who perfectly saw and understood their Malice to him, and the future Consequences of it. As he came to lay down his Life for the Redemption of Mankind, by dying upon the Cross; and to take it up again, by his glorious Resurrection, he, not obscurely, intimates it, by what he said to his Disciples: *He that loveth his Life shall lose it: And he that loseth his Life in this World, preserveth it unto Life everlasting.* A yet plainer Declaration to the Apostles, and in them to all Christians, That if, by an Overfondness of Life, and the Things of this World, we do any Thing contrary to our Duty, instead of saving our Life, unless for a few uncertain Moments, we shall lose our Life for all Eternity. But if, on the other Hand, we generously chuse to sacrifice all worldly Views, give up our Hopes and Expectations here, and

even

even willingly part with our Lives rather than betray the Cause of God, or do any Thing contrary to his Will and Pleasure; we may indeed lose them to this World, but shall find them again in the other, with great Advantage, by living for ever; and receive a superabundant Recompence for whatever we suffer here.

A Point, this, of great Importance, and to be well considered by every one: There being none, but what are concerned in it more or less, in some Case or other. For it is not only to be understood of losing our Life, and dying for the Faith, like the Apostles, and primitive Martyrs; but includes all Christians, and every Circumstance wherein Duty clashes with Interest, and we must either transgress one, or suffer in the other. A Case, I believe, that frequently happens, and wherein it is to be wished that Christians acted more conformable to the Principles of the Gospel, than they generally do, as is pretty apparent from that general Bent towards Interest and temporal Advantages; and the great Slackness and Indifference too many shew in what regards Religion, and the practical Part of their Duty. A dangerous and fatal Error, which is attended with the worst of Consequences, such as the Purchase of the whole World can never rectify, nor compensate for the Loss thereby sustained.

To

To be thoroughly convinced of this, we need only compare one with the other; we need only put this World and the next, what we can lose or gain in the one and the other, into the Balance of an impartial Consideration, and we shall soon see, what a wide Difference there is. What is there to be lost or gained in this World? Our Possessions, our Riches and Estates? Part of them only, perhaps some little Advantage, or Prospect of improving our Fortune; and this to be lost, or gained, by doing, or not doing, what we are obliged to. Can we balance, though but for a Minute, in our Choice, when we consider that by doing what is contrary to the Truth, or Justice, or not discharging what those Duties require, we shall certainly lose the Favour of God, and the Happiness of Heaven: Or if we act the Part of sincere and conscientious Christians, though we lose something in this World, we shall be very great Gainers in the next? Suppose even our Life at Stake, and to depend on our doing what we ought not to do, or not doing what we ought. Is not the Consideration of eternal Life a sufficient Motive to make a wise Choice, and rather lose our corporal Life, than to preserve it at the Price of our immortal Soul? Can the saving our Lives, and prolonging them for a few Years here, be a sufficient Reason to lose them for all Eternity hereafter? We must be strangely infatuated if we think so; and the World and the Enjoyments of it must have a surprising Influence upon us.

It

It will be hard to find any one, who calls himself a Christian, that will not condemn such a Choice, and protest against it. How comes it to pass, then, that the Practice of so many seems to declare that they are only desirous of what may be had here, and give up all Thoughts or Concern for any Thing hereafter? This, I own, bears hard upon Numbers, and is a severe Reflection upon their Judgment: But is no more than a natural Consequence, drawn from the Premises of their irregular Conduct. If Men acted by the Gospel-Rule, there would not, for the gaining a little Money, Honour, or Profit, be so many Injustices, Frauds and Deceits, as are practised in the World. The practical Part of Religion would not be so much neglected, nor so often be omitted, to follow sinful Pleasure, Diversion and vain Amusements. In short, one of the great Causes of the general Decay of Virtue and Piety, Justice, and Equity, is this: Christians do not seriously reflect upon the Truths of the Gospel, and, while they profess to believe in Christ, do not consider, as they ought, what he says: *Whoever would save his Life, shall lose it: And whosoever shall lose his Life for my Sake, shall find it. For what doth it avail a Man, if he gain the World, and incur the Loss of his own Soul? Or what shall a Man give in Exchange for his Soul?* Matt. xvi. How foolish then are all those who hazard the Loss of their Souls, not to gain the whole World, or any considerable Part, but for a very small and inconsiderable

able Portion of it? Can any Folly be greater than thus to lose Heaven, and be eternally miserable in the next World for a trifling share of this?

A S P I R A T I O N S.

Deliver me, O merciful Lord, from so great a Folly. Let me never put the poor Enjoyments of this Life in Competition with the solid and lasting Ones of the other. Let me never to gain any Thing in this World, hazard the Loss of my Soul, by offending thee. I rather chuse, if it be thy holy Will, to suffer the Loss of all I have, and to part with Life itself. Whatever Trouble or Inconveniences I meet with here, all shall be easy, all welcome, so I save my Soul. I submit to be miserable here, if that is requisite to make me happy hereafter. My Soul is thine: Thou hast created it, and for thyself. Thou hast redeemed and purchased it, at the dear Price of thy precious Blood. Nothing, then, in this World shall buy it from thee. The World shall never purchase it. I will keep it carefully for thee, till thou shalt please to require it of me, and take it to thyself, to be happy in Heaven for ever with thee.

As thou, O God! art the sole and great End of my Being, no one has a Right to this my Soul but thou. It was not for this World that thou madest me after thine own Image and Likeness, and didst give me this living and immortal Soul. Thou didst make it for thyself,
and

and that it might be happy with thee for ever. And for this I know that I must love and serve thee here. May I never forget this my great and last End. May I daily labour to arrive at it. Remember then, my Soul, that we belong to God, we are his. We bear his Image and Superscription. And has he not told us, that we must render to God, the Things which are God's? Yes, O my sovereign Lord and Master, thou hast said it, and I do here give my Soul, my whole Self to thee. Take it, O Lord, and receive it as a Tribute justly due to thee. Mayest thou totally possess it here, that it may possess and enjoy thee hereafter.





P A L M S U N D A Y.

THIS *Sunday* takes its Denomination from an ancient Custom, still retained and observed, in the Church, of solemnly blessing Palms, or Boughs, and distributing them to the People, who bear them in their Hands this Day in Honour of, and in Remembrance of our blessed Lord's triumphant Entry into *Jerusalem* six Days before his Passion, when the Multitude going forth to meet him, some cut down Boughs of Trees, and strewed them in the Way, others spread their Garments, and others carried Branches of Palms in their Hands. All singing aloud, *Hosanna to the Son of David, &c.* From this Entry of Jesus Christ into *Jerusalem*, the Church reads us a proper Lesson of Humility. Our blessed Saviour, tho' he was Lord of Heaven and Earth, yet chose to ride upon a silly Ass, the meanest and most contemptible of Beasts, to correct our Pride, and to teach us not to affect the Grandeurs and Honours of this World, which are
vain

vain and transitory. Let us practice this Humility, and thereby imitate our humble and Divine Saviour; and better dispose ourselves to celebrate the Myſteries of this Holy Week, and ſhare in the Mercies deſigned for us.

At Bleſſing of the P A L M S.

The G O S P E L, St. *Matt.* xxi. 1.

AND when they drew nigh to *Jeruſalem*, and were come to *Bethphage* unto Mount *Olivet*, then Jeſus ſent two Diſciples: 2. Saying to them: Go into the Village that is over-againſt you, and immediately you ſhall find an Aſs tied, and a Colt with her: Loofe them and bring them to me. 3. And if any Man ſhall ſay any Thing to you, ſay ye that the Lord hath Need of them; and forthwith he will let them go. 4. Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was ſpoken by the Prophet, ſaying: 5. Tell the Daughter of *Sion*: Behold thy King cometh to thee, meek and ſitting upon an Aſs, and a Colt, the Fole of her that is uſed to the Yoke. 6. And the Diſciples going did as Jeſus commanded them. 7. And they brought the Aſs and the Colt, and laid their Garments upon them, and made him to ſit thereon. 8. And a very great Multitude ſpread their Garments in the Way: Others cut Boughs from the Trees, and ſtrewed them in the

Way. 9. And the Multitude that went before and that followed, cried out, saying: *Hosanna* to the Son of *David*: Blessed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord: *Hosanna* in the Highest.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

Nothing is more unconstant than the World. Nothing more vain than the Honours it pays us, and the Caresses with which it flatters us. The Wind, which changes almost every Hour, is not so uncertain and unstable. Of this the Behaviour of the *Jews* to our blessed Saviour is an excellent Representation, and a convincing Proof. The holy Jesus made his Entry into *Jerusalem* amidst the loud Acclamations and *Hosannas* of the People, who, hearing he was come near to *Jerusalem*, went out to meet him, carrying Palms in their Hands, and strewing the Way with Boughs of Trees. Others more zealous to shew him Respect and honour him, stripped themselves of their Garments, and spread them in the Way, that he might ride upon them. All crouding about him, and loudly singing: *Hosanna in the Highest: Blessed be he, who cometh in the Name of the Lord: Hosanna to the Son of David*, *Matt. xxi.* In this Manner they waited upon him into the City, with all the Marks of a sincere Veneration and Esteem: But, no sooner was he come into the Town, when the Multitude dispersed; every one went his Way without taking any further

further Notice of him; and not one of them invited him to their Houses, or offered him any Refreshment. So that this Day of Triumph was, to our blessed Lord, a Day of Fasting; and in the Evening he was obliged to quit the City, and retire to *Bethanin*, there to seek for Lodging and Refreshment for himself and his Disciples. Strange Inconstancy of a giddy Multitude! True Picture of what the World is, and what we may expect from it!

It is in Honour and Commemoration of this Entrance of Christ into *Jerusalem*, that the Church orders Palms, or Boughs of Trees, this Day to be blessed, and to be carried in their Hands by the Faithful, and desires, at the same Time, we would enter into her pious Sentiments, and learn those practical Lessons she teaches us from this Day's Solemnity. We have now passed over the greatest Part of *Lent*, and are come to the last and great Week, justly called the Holy Week, on Account of those sacred Mysteries which are particularly proposed to our pious Reflections, and are the Subject of the Church's long and solemn Devotions at this Time. It is now we are to recollect our scattered Thoughts; and by Retirement, and more than ordinary Devotion, make up what has been deficient in our Conduct during the past Time of *Lent*. It is now we are called upon, seriously to consider and behold what God has done for us, that from thence we may in some Measure, learn his great Love to us, and our reciprocal Obligations to him. For

this Reason, the Passion of our blessed Saviour, the Prophecies relating to it, and the Circumstances attending it, are the Subject of the Epistles and Gospels, which the Church reads at this Time. And the best Method of consecrating this Week to God, and truly to keep it holy, according to the Name it bears, is to go along with the Church, and make some Mystery, or Part of Christ's Passion, the Subject of our Devotions in private, and of our Closet Entertainments. It is what we have just Reason to reflect upon, with all the Gratitude possible, every Day of our Lives; but to neglect, or carelessly to perform it at this Time, must argue us guilty of a strange Insensibility, justly deserving a Reproof. As for Diversions and Entertainments, they may, surely! be suspended for a few Days, and in Reality are so inconsistent with the serious Duties of this Week, and the Spirit of the Church, as not to be thought on, much less sought after, without a Fault.

To begin then this Holy Week as we ought, we may this Day consider how our Blessed Lord disposes himself for his approaching Passion, and therein read many useful and instructive Lessons. The Time being come wherein the Son of God had determined to offer up himself to his eternal Father a Sacrifice for the Redemption of Mankind, he prepares to enter upon the glorious, but bitter Stage of his Sufferings; and rejoicing as a Giant to run his Course, *Psal. xviii.* carried on by the same
Ardour

Ardour of Love which brought him down from Heaven to Earth, he made his Entrance into *Jerusalem*, there to finish that great Work, he had so mercifully begun. He would not make his Entry, like worldly Princes, with Pageantry and Show, glittering in Gold and Silver, but chose to ride upon an Ass, one of the meanest and most contemptible of Beasts. Astonishing Sight! the great Lord of all the World enters into *Jerusalem*, the Capital of *Judea*, riding upon an Ass; and though he might have been attended with Legions of Angels, and have appeared with a Pomp greater than any of the *Roman Cæsars*, he would not. His Attendants are his Disciples, a few poor Fishermen, and the Multitude who went forth to meet him. He enters indeed in Triumph; but it is to pass from that Triumph to an ignominious Death. He is ushered in by the loud Acclamations of the People, within a few Days to suffer, from the same People, the greatest Barbarity and Cruelty. He made his Entrance in this Manner, to fulfil likewise the Prediction of the Prophet *Zachary*, and to leave the obstinate *Jews* without any Excuse for not acknowledging him to be their promised *Messias*, since there was not one of the Prophecies concerning him which he had not fulfilled, and that in every minute Circumstance.

What we are to learn from hence is, to despise and condemn the Honours and Grandeurs of the World; not to be fond of Pageantry and Show, nor to affect Pomp and State, or

observe it further than the Rank and Station we bear in the World require, and is consistent with the humble and self-denying Principles of the Gospel. Where Providence has placed us in a high Station, elevated above the Vulgar, we may lawfully observe and keep up that Port which is necessary to maintain the Respect due to us, in the Quality and Character we bear. But this must be done without Pride or Haughtiness, and may be observed without any Affectation for Magnificence and Parade. The Distinction between us, and those of a lower and inferior Rank, may give us this useful Lesson, that as the Difference is not owing to ourselves, but to the bountiful Hand of Providence, we must gratefully acknowledge his Gifts, and use them to his Honour and Glory; and learn to compassionate the Poor, and be glad that it is in our Power to relieve their Wants. Thus we see our blessed Saviour not at all moved by the extraordinary Honours paid him by the Multitude, or by their loud *Hosannas* and proclaiming him the Son of *David*. Drawing near to *Jerusalem*, he tenderly wept over that unhappy City, bewailed the Blindness of that obstinate People, and shed Tears of Compassion over their impending Ruin. Excellent Instruction for his Followers, not to ambitiate Honours and Dignities, not to seek after, nor be puffed up with the Praises of Men; but to consider ourselves in a true Light, and mourn over our own Weakness and Miseries, and sincerely to compassionate those of others.

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We have little Reason to be fond of, and to place our Affections on any Thing in this World, where every Thing is so uncertain and inconstant, so subject to Vicissitude and Change. We have as little Reason to value ourselves upon the Applauses and Commendations of Men, which are in the highest Degree mutable, and never last long. They often exclaim, cry out against, and condemn those as not worthy to live, whom, a few Days before, they extolled above the Skies, and even deified. Those very *Jews* who sung *Hosanna* to our Saviour, and proclaimed him the Son of *David*, within a few Days afterwards cried out as loud, *Take him away, take him away, crucify him, crucify him. We will not have this Man, but Barabbas.*

Another Lesson we are to learn from this Day's Solemnity, and which the Palms we bear in our Hands are designed to teach us, is, that as they are Tokens of Christ's Victory over Sin and Death, and Marks of his Triumph, they ought also, in some Measure, to be Marks of ours. For it will be of little Advantage to us, that Christ has overcome the Devil, purchased our Redemption, and restored us to the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God, if we do not maintain that Liberty, but permit ourselves to be brought again under the Devil's Tyranny, and become his Slaves again by Sin. In order to prevent this Misfortune, we must consider that, while we are in this World, we are engaged in a Warfare against our spiritual Enemies: That Jesus Christ has not only over-

come them, but has shewn us how we may overcome them likewise. As he is our Captain and Leader, we must follow his Example, and obey his Orders, otherwise we shall soon be overcome ourselves, and fall into the Power of our Enemies. Looking then upon the Palms we have received this Day, let the mystical Signification of them inspire us with a generous Resolution to behave ourselves as we ought; and to this Resolution add our effectual Endeavours. For it is not thinking, or resolving only, but acting, that will gain the Victory, and entitle us to the Triumph. A Soldier, who thinks and makes some Resolutions to fight his Enemy, but when he meets him, and is attacked, makes none, or but a faint Resistance, must expect either to be killed, or made Prisoner: And what can those Christians hope for, who sometimes think, and seemingly resolve to resist the Devil; but on the first Attack yield to him; on the first Occasion, give up their Arms, and submit to his Power? Such have no Share in the Solemnity of this Day; they have no Title to any Part in Christ's Triumph: And if they remain Slaves under the most cruel of Tyrants, they have only to blame themselves and their own Cowardice. For, however violently the Devil may assault us, he cannot prevail, if we are not wanting to ourselves. He may solicit, persuade and allure, but he cannot force us. We have Free-Will and Liberty. We have the Grace of God to assist us. He cannot hurt us, unless we ourselves

selves will, by yielding to his Temptations. If we resist him he will fly from us. And the more rude his Assaults are, and the more violent his Sollicitations, the more glorious will be our Victory if we yield not, and the more glorious our Reward. The more Wounds a Soldier receives, and the greater Opposition he finds, serve but to render the Victory, when obtained, more illustrious, and the more recommend him to his Prince, and heighten his Reputation. It is the same in our spiritual Combats against the World, the Flesh and the Devil. The more strenuously we resist them, the sooner we shall overcome, and the greater will be our Recompence. We may then, with Comfort and Satisfaction, receive blest Palms here, as Pledges of those never-fading Palms and glorious Crowns we shall receive hereafter.

A S P I R A T I O N S.

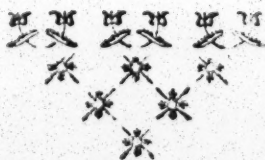
Adorable *Jesus!* permit me to bear a Part in thy Triumph, and, with a grateful Heart sing aloud: *Blessed art thou, O Son of David. Glory be to thee in the Highest.* But, while I thus desire to share in thy Triumphs, let me also share in thy Victories; and by a faithful Resistance of all my Enemies, put them to Flight. Thou hast broken my Chains, and set me free. May I never, through my own Negligence, or Cowardice, become a Slave again, and rob thee of the Fruits of that Conquest

quest which cost thee so many Labours, so much Blood. Thou hast taught us to contemn and despise the fading uncertain Honours and false Grandeur of this World, and by the Way of Humility dost conduct us to the more lasting Honours of thy heavenly Kingdom. O may thy example be deeply imprinted in my Heart, and be constantly before my Eyes, that I may make it the Rule of my Conduct! Then shall I know how to be humble, though thy Providence shall place me here in a high Station; and to be content with my Lot, if thou shalt judge proper to rank me among those of the lowest Class. Whatever Condition or State I am in here, if I follow thee, I shall be happy hereafter.

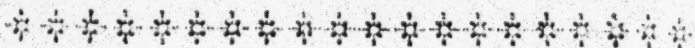
O dear Redeemer of the World! thou wast not moved at the loud Acclamations of the People, but didst pity their Misery and their Blindness, and didst shed Tears over their impending Ruin. O Jesus, thou meek and compassionate Saviour of Mankind! may I never be puffed up with the Praises of Men, nor value myself, upon their Applause! Root out of my Heart all vain Glory and Ambition, that I may seek only to please thee.

O thou true and certain Happiness of my Soul! when shall I be so happy as to seek thee only, and to adhere to thee alone? Where shall I find what can deserve my Love and Affection so much as thou dost? What is there in the World, or in any Thing it can bestow, that can satisfy the Demands of a Soul which loves thee,

thee, and is created for thee? Alas! my God, my only true Good, the World is nothing but Vanity and Deceit: All its Honours are empty Bubbles; all its Riches mean and despicable; all its Pleasures Filth, and nothing worth in Comparison of thee the endless Source of all Good. Let me not then foolishly misplace my Affections, and set my Heart upon them. My Heart was created for thee, and thou hast made it for thyself. O may it ever be unquiet till it happily comes to rest in thee.



MON-



M O N D A Y

In Holy Week.

The G O S P E L, St. *John* xii. 1.

JESUS therefore six Days before the Pasche came to *Bethania*, where *Lazarus* had been dead, whom Jesus raised to Life. 2. And they made him a Supper there, and *Martha* served, but *Lazarus* was one of them that were at Table with him. 3. *Mary* therefore took a Pound of Ointment, of right Spike-nard, of great Price, and anointed the Feet of Jesus, and wiped his Feet with her Hair: And the House was filled with the Odour of the Ointment. 4. Then one of his Disciples, *Judas Iscariot*, he that was about to betray him, said: 5. Why was not this Ointment sold for three hundred Pence, and given
to

to the Poor? 6. Now he said this, not that he cared for the Poor, but because he was a Thief, and having the Purse, carried what was put into it. 7. Jesus therefore said: Let her alone, that she may keep it against the Day of my Burial: 8. For the Poor you have always with you, but me you have not always. 9. A great Multitude therefore of the *Jews* knew that he was there: And they came, not for Jesus's Sake only, but that they might see *Lazarus*, whom he raised from the Dead.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

On the great Desire of Christ to suffer for us.

As the Sufferings and Death of Jesus Christ, are what the Church proposes for the Entertainment of our pious Thoughts this Week; we may behold our dear Redeemer, in this Gospel, preparing himself to undergo those Sufferings, and to accept that Death designed for him. The Time drew near, and he was in the House of *Mary* and *Martha*, where those pious Sisters entertained them with their accustomed Charity and Hospitality. *Martha* waited, and *Lazarus*, their Brother, whom Jesus had raised from the Dead, sat at Table with him: But *Mary*, desirous to give her dear Lord another, and farewell Proof of her great Love

Love and Affection, took some of her precious Ointment of Spikenard, and anointed his Feet, and wiped them with her Hair. She had once before washed them with her penitential Tears, and kissed them with ardent Affections of Love and Sorrow, and then received the Approbation of Jesus Christ for what she had done. *Simon* the *Pharisee*, at that Time, censured and condemned her as a Sinner: But our Blessed Lord became her Advocate, and sent her away in Peace, *Luke vii.* Here *Judas Iscariot*, the Traitor, murmurs at her pious Generosity, and with a Show of Zeal for the Poor, demands why the Ointment was not sold for three hundred *Roman Pence*, and given to them. Christ takes up her Cause again, and justifies what she did, not without a tacit Condemnation of the false Apostle's Covetousness; who, as the Evangelist observes, did not put the Question out of any real Concern for the Poor, but a View to his own private Benefit, for bearing the Purse, and what was put therein by those devout People who ministered to Christ and his Disciples, he thought three hundred *Roman Pence* would be in his Power, and which he might privately take to himself. Wretched Spirit of Covetousness! and which had then determined the unhappy *Judas* to sell his Master for thirty Pieces of Silver, and to deliver him into the Hands of his Enemies. This the Holy Jesus knew, and therefore said, that whatever *St. Mary Magdalen* had done, was in order to his Burial; signify-

signifying likewise, that it was the last Time she should receive him into her House, or entertain him at her Table, *Mark xiv.*

Among the several Subjects which offer themselves to our Thoughts, in reflecting on this Gospel, the most proper, and suitable to this present holy Season, is to consider the great and ardent Desire Christ had of suffering, that thereby he might redeem Mankind from Sin and Death, and restore us to Happiness and eternal Life. This Desire with great Vehemency, he himself thus declares: *I have a Baptism to be baptized with; and I am shreighted till it be accomplished,* Luke xii. So earnestly did he desire to suffer, and wish for the Time, that celebrating the last Supper with his Disciples, he said to Judas, who was to betray him, *What thou dost, do quickly,* John xiii. As the Redemption of Man was the End of his coming into the World; and his Sufferings and Death, the Means to obtain that End, he longed by them to accomplish it. For this Reason he said to the Apostles: *I have earnestly desired to eat this Pasche with you before I suffer,* Luke xxii. As being the last Time, which was to be immediately followed by his Passion. After his Prayer in the Garden, as if impatient to stay the Coming of Judas, he said to St. Peter, *Arise, let us go hence,* Matt. xxvi. and immediately went to meet his Enemies, and delivered himself up to them. The zealous Prince of the Apostles drew his Sword in Defence of his Master,

Master, and cut off the Ear of the High Priest's Servant: But our Blessed Saviour immediately ordered him to put it up again into the Scabbard. He required no Assistance, because he desired not to be delivered. His Sufferings were of his own free Choice. Had he not been willing, and permitted the *Jews* to lay Hands on him, all the Powers of the Universe could not have hurt him. And to let them see how easily he could have delivered himself out of their Hands, with one Word he laid them at his Feet. He asked them, whom they sought? They answered, *Jesus of Nazareth*, John xviii. And as soon as he replied, *I am he*, they fell backwards on the Ground; nor could they rise till he gave them Permission. This Circumstance, as it shews that his Sufferings were of his own Choice, so it demonstrates the great and ardent Desire he had of suffering. *Oblatus est quia ipse voluit. He was offered up, because he himself would*, *Isaias liii.*

From the Consideration of the great Desire Christ had to shed his sacred Blood, and die, we may carry our Thoughts further to consider and reflect with ourselves, for whom he thus died. That it was for us, and for our Sakes: For our Redemption, and to free us from the sad and deplorable State to which we were reduced by Sin. This will fill our Minds with just Ideas, and right Notions of his great Love to us, and the equally great Obligations we are under to love him again. He died for our
Sins,

Sins, and when we were thereby Enemies to God, and the unfortunate Objects of his just Wrath and Indignation. Wonderful Instance of divine Bounty and Goodness! and which the Apostle St. Paul thus expresses with moving Energy, and inspired Eloquence: *Why did Christ, when we were yet weak, in due Time die for the Wicked? For scarce for a just Man doth any one die. Yet perhaps for a good Man, some one may dare to die. But God recommends his Love to us; inasmuch as when we were Sinners, Christ died for us, Rom. v. We were Sinners, and as such, condemned not only to temporal, but eternal Death; and in this sad Condition must have remained, unable to help ourselves, had not the Mercy of God from on High, visited us. Justice had pronounced the terrible Decree against us, but Mercy intervened and reversed the Sentence. The Son of God offered himself to make Atonement for our Sins, and by dying for us, to satisfy the Justice of his eternal Father, and free us from eternal Death; changing likewise our temporal Death, and making that, which in itself is bitter and disagreeable, an Advantage to us, by rendering it now, no more than a short and easy Passage to the eternal Happiness purchased for us, and to which we are restored by his Death and Passion. This is that Love God has shewn to us, and which the great beloved Apostle thus declares, So hath God loved the World, that he hath given his only begotten Son, that the World should be saved by him, John iii. Who hath also*

as he loved us, and washed us from our Sins, by his Blood, Apoc. i. For us Christ suffered: For us he died upon the Cross, and endured all those cruel Pains and Torments which are related by the Holy Evangelists, and are at present laid before us, in order to make us love him again.

That this ought to be the Effect of his Love, and the Consequence of what he has done for us, is easy to be proved, and as easily acknowledged. Would to God, we could as easily shew that it does produce this Effect in us! I do not mean, a soft, tender Compassion only for the Sufferings of our dear Redeemer: A being moved to Pity only at the Consideration of his cruel Torments and bitter Passion. That, though some Argument of Love and Affection, is not all that is required at our Hands, or wherein the Return we ought to make him for his Love, does consist. No, I speak of a larger and more extensive Love. A Love which produces in us a great Hatred to Sin, the only Cause of his Sufferings; an extream Aversion for every Thing that displeases him, and a great Care to please him, by observing his holy Commands. A Love that makes us willing to suffer with him, and content under all the Dispensations of his Will. A Love that causes us to die, in Heart and Affections, to this World and every Thing in it; and make us vigorously, daily render him, the Object of our Love, that we may be able to say with *St. Paul, I live, not I*

but Christ in me, and I in him, Gal. ii. This is that Love we are to have for him, and the Return he justly requires from us: And it is thus we must prove the Truth of what we assert, when we say, We love him. *If you love me*, says Christ, *keep my Commandments*, John xiv. Without that, in vain we pretend to belong to him, nor will his Sufferings be of any Advantage to us. While then we entertain our Thoughts, at this Time, with considering the Passion of our Saviour, let the Result of our Meditations be, a serious and sincere Resolution to give him this Proof of our Love: And beholding what he has done for us, and to satisfy for our Sins, be careful not to take Part with those who crucified him, or renew his Sufferings by Sin. This is to honour the Mysteries of this holy Time, as we ought, and will make our Devotions acceptable to God, and procure us the Happiness purchased for us by the sacred Blood of Jesus.

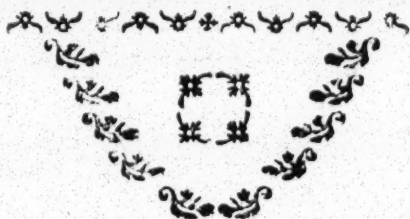
A S P I R A T I O N S.

O thou blessed Author of Life, and eternal Source of Happiness, adorable Jesus! thou didst freely, and of thy own Accord, chuse to die, that thou mightest by thy Death, give us true Life. Thou didst even burn with a holy Impatience till the Time came wherein thou wast to suffer for Sinners. What Returns

turns are we capable of making to thee, for this thy Love to us? Love, dear Lord, carried thee on with so much Ardour to undergo those cruel Torments that were inflicted upon thee. Love nailed thee to the Cross, and Love for us was the Cause of thy Death. O that I could but in some Measure love thee, as thou hast loved me! I compassionate thy Suffering, Divine Redeemer of Mankind! and admire the wonderful Effects of thy Love. Let this Admiration produce some Effects in my Heart, that I may truly love thee again, and manifest this Love by a faithful Observance of thy holy Commandments.

Ah dearest Lord! let me henceforth have no other View, no other Desires than to please thee, and to make some Returns to thy Love. Why should I search for any Thing, or think any Thing worth my Attention but thee! Hast thou done so much, and so earnestly desired to suffer for me, O true Life and Happiness of my Soul! And shall I be unwilling to do something for thee: Hast thou so earnestly desired my Salvation, and suffered so much to procure it, and shall I not do something for myself, and to secure the Happiness of my Soul thus redeemed by thy precious Blood, and redeemed by the Price of so many Torments, such cruel Sufferings? O Lord! O my God! All my Life, and all my Bliss! I will not be so ungrateful to thy Love. I will not be so negligent of myself, nor so little esteem what has cost thee so dear. I will carefully preserve

this Soul of mine for thee, and because it is thine likewise. Whatever may be necessary for this, I will comply with. I will part with every Thing, even Life itself, rather than hazard the Loss of my Soul, or that what thou hast done for me should be frustrated and in vain.

**TUESDAY**



T U E S D A Y

In *Holy Week.*

The GOSPEL, or PASSION.

St. MARK, xiv. 32.

AND they came to a Farm, called *Geth-semnai*. And he saith to his Disciples, sit you here while I pray. 33. And he taketh with him *Peter*, and *James*, and *John*, and began to fear, and to be heavy. 34. And he saith to them, My Soul is sorrowful even to Death ; stay here and watch. 35. And when he was gone a little further, he fell on the Ground, and prayed, that if it might be possible, the Hour might pass from him. 36. And he said, Abba, Father, all Things are possible to thee, remove this Chalice from me, but not what I will, but what thou wilt. 37. And

And he cometh and findeth them sleeping ; and he saith to *Peter*, *Simon*, sleepest thou ? Couldst thou not watch one Hour ? 38. Watch and pray, that you enter not into Temptation. The Spirit indeed is willing, but the Flesh is weak. 39. And going away again he prayed, saying the same Words. 40. And returning, he found them again asleep (for their Eyes were become heavy) and they knew not what to answer him. 41. And he cometh the third Time, and saith to them : Sleep ye now, and take your Rest. It is enough, the Hour is come ; behold the Son of Man shall be betrayed into the Hands of Sinners. 42. Rise up, let us go : Behold he that will betray me is at Hand.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

On Jesus praying in the Garden.

The Son of God having celebrated the Pasche with his Disciples, and instituted the most holy Sacrament, rising from Table, goes with them to *Get'semani*, and enters into a Garden there ; a Place to which he had been accustomed to resort with the Apostles, and which was well known to the Traitor *Judas*. About to enter upon the Theatre of his Passion, he would open the first Scene in a Garden, as it was in the Garden of *Eden*, that Sin was committed by our first Parents, to expiate and make Atonement for which he was

Q

going

going to suffer and die. Being arrived at this Place, he bids his other Disciples stay at the Entrance and watch, while he went further to pray. But as St. *Peter*, St. *James*, and St. *John*, had been present with him, on Mount *Thabor*, and there beheld his glorious Transfiguration, he would have them present at his Agony; and be Witnesses of what passed in the Garden of *Gethsemani*. Having taken them with him, he says to them, *My Soul is sorrowful even to Death. He began, says the Evangelist, to fear, and to be heavy.* This is the first Circumstance of his Passion, wherein we are invited now to wait upon him through all the different Stages of it with tender Sentiments of Grief and Sorrow, Love and Affection.

As the Life of the adorable *Jesus* began with suffering in the Stable of *Bethlehem*, and was one continued Series of Suffering, from the Malice of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, he would end it also in suffering, and begins his Passion by an extraordinary Sorrow and Grief, which proceeded not so much from the lively Apprehension he had, and the Knowledge of what he was to undergo from the Malice and Barbarity of the *Jews*, as from the Sight of those Sins he was to suffer for. The View he then had of the cruel Torments prepared for him, might very well make some Impression upon his human Nature; but the great Cause of his Sorrow and Grief, was the Sins of Mankind, not only those of the then past Ages, but of those of future
 Times

Times also to the End of the World. He then saw the extream Ingratitude with which his infinite Love and Bounty would be repayed by Christians. He saw how few would profit by his Death and Passion, in Comparison of those greater Numbers, who would perish, notwithstanding what he did to save them; and that, not through any Deficiency of his, but their own wilful Folly and Malice, and the Abuse of his Mercies. To die for so many ungrateful Wretches, who, by their Sins would trample upon his sacred Blood, and crucify him again; this filled his Soul with Sorrow and Grief, and made him cry out, *My Soul is sorrowful even unto Death.* How ought we to be covered with Confusion, to behold Jesus thus abandon himself to Sorrow and Grief, for those Sins which we so frequently commit, and take Pleasure in?

Having expressed the Grief he was in to his Disciples, he goes a little Way from them, and falling on the Ground, prays to his Father, that the Cup of Suffering might pass from him: but adds with a perfect Resignation, *Not what I will, but what thou wilt.* This Prayer he repeats three Times, and every Time with the same Spirit of Submission: *O my Father, if this Cup cannot pass away, except I drink it, thy Will be done,* Matt. xxvi. The Evangelist St. Luke adds, that being in an Agony, he prayed the more. And his Sweat was as Drops of Blood trickling down upon the Ground. And an Angel appeared to him from Heaven, comforting him,

lim, Luke xxii. Astonishing Sight! the eternal Son of God prostrates himself upon his Face, and like a poor Criminal begging for Mercy, desires his heavenly Father, if it were possible, the Cup of Suffering might pass from him. With what Fervour and Seriousness our Saviour prays! What a Reproach to our Coldness and Indevotion, not to say Laziness, at our Prayers! He permits human Nature to show itself, in begging not to suffer; but having voluntarily, and of free Choice undertaken it, he is content, and concludes his Prayer with the most perfect Resignation to his Father's Will. How sensible! How great must his Trouble and Concern have been, which forced a bloody Sweat from every Pore of his sacred Body, and brought an Angel down from Heaven to comfort him? What Comfort could a Creature (for such, and no more, all the Angels are) administer to his great Creator? We may piously suppose that, with the utmost Respect, he laid before our Blessed Saviour the Glory of his Eternal Father, he was always so desirous of advancing. The Glory and Honour which would redound to his own sacred Humanity, from his Victory over the Devil: And the Happiness of those, who should be saved by his Sufferings. These, or the like Motives, we may suppose the Angel represented to Jesus Christ, who willingly accepting, what he had voluntarily chosen, rises from his Prayer, and goes to meet his Enemies, and the Traitor

Judas,

Judas, who was coming to betray him into their Hands.

During this Time, the Apostles were asleep, without any Care or Concern for him. All their fine Promises never to leave him, were buried in a profound Slumber. So little were they solicitous for their Divine Master! The holy Jesus, full of Mildness and Condescension, gently reproves their Negligence; and even excuses them on Account of weak and frail Nature. He exhorts them to watch and pray, that they might not enter into Temptation; and in them admonishes us to be upon our Guard, that we may not give the Enemy any Advantage over us.

Many excellent Instructions are contained in this Mystery of our Lord's Agony, and Prayer in the Garden. From his repeated Petitions to his heavenly Father, we are taught to have Recourse to God by Prayer, in all our Troubles and Adversities. To seek Comfort and Consolation from him, by an entire Resignation to his holy Will: And whenever we desire to be freed from any Suffering, always desire it no further than as he shall please, and as shall be suitable to his Blessed Will. We are taught likewise to be constant and fervent in our Prayers, to persevere therein, and not to grow faint, tired, and leave off. We further learn from the Agony of Jesus, that we must not think all is lost, when in our inferior Part, we feel a Repugnance to suffer, nor judge from the Weakness of our Flesh,

but from our Spirit, and the Dispositions of our Will. Christ, in the Garden, made appear the Opposition of his two Wills, one, by which he desired not to suffer; and the other, by which he submitted to the Will of his Father, and freely accepted of his Passion; and this to instruct us, that we must not be discouraged, nor cast down, when we find the Flesh rebel against the Spirit, but endeavour to master it, and keep it in Subjection. Nor can its Motions, how irregular soever, hurt us, while our Will does not consent, and we do nothing contrary to the Will of God. Lastly, our Blessed Lord desired of his Father to be exempted from suffering, though he knew, that having of his own free Will offered himself to suffer, his Petition would not be granted, to instruct us in this necessary Truth, that the Divine Assistance does not always consist in delivering us from our Trouble and Sufferings, but in making us bear them with an humble Submission, and Conformity to the Will of God, whereby we say, in all Trials, and Afflictions: *If it be possible let this Cup pass from me: Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt, Matt. xxvi.*

A S P I R A T I O N S.

How different is my Conduct from thine, adorable Saviour of the World? A little Cross, a small Affliction fills me with Sadness and Sorrow, I do all I can, and oftentimes labour in vain, to be freed from them; whilst thou, the true Repose of our Souls, overcome by Love, dost voluntarily abandon thyself to Sorrow and Grief. Thou bringest into thy Mind, all that can afflict a Heart so tender, so charitable, and which is the only Refuge of all who suffer. Thou art sensible of the same Evils we are; but we are sensible of them because we are miserable: And thou art sensible of them, because thou art merciful. O Jesus! how great is thy Love to us? thou hast considered all our Necessities and all our Afflictions, wherein our Weakness might any Ways stand in Need of thy Help: That, considering thee to have been subject to our natural Weakness, we might seek all our Consolation in thee. For this Reason, thou dost assure us by thy own holy Example, that although we find ourselves weak and feeble, yet we should not despond, nor lose our Hopes and Confidence in thee. That, when overwhelmed with Sadness, and sensible of our Misery, we are not abandoned by thee. May thy holy Name be praised, O God of infinite Bounty! who hast thus rendered our Weakness and Misery able to bring us to thee,

by suffering with thee and like thee in Patience and Resignation to thy holy Will.

O Jesus, eternal Source of all Happiness! O thou who art the Bliss of Heaven, and Crown of all the Saints! What Astonishment ought I to be in, thus to behold thee sorrowful and over-pressed with Grief? Ah dearest Lord! is any Thing capable of afflicting thee, who art the Source of all true Joy, the sovereign Remedy of all our Evils, and only Comfort in all our Troubles? Alas dear Redeemer, thy Heart is full of Love for us thy Creatures, and thy Concern for us makes thee sad! Thou beholdest not only the Torments of thy dolorous and afflicting Passion, but also, the horrible Ingratitude of those for whom thou dost suffer. O my God! when I consider this, and reflect upon the unworthy Use I have made of thy Bounty, I no longer wonder at thy Sorrow and Grief: And how ought I, at the same Time to be covered with Confusion to behold myself, and to observe this wretched Ingratitude to thee?

O true and only Happiness of my Soul! how ungrateful am I, thus to forget the Love thou hast shewn to me? thus to neglect the Love I owe to thee? What can I say for myself, as passing my Life in the Commission of those Sins which cause thee such an Excess of Grief as to force Blood from every Pore of thy sacred Body? How is it that I am not ashamed of myself? How can I even support myself, when I behold thee in a bitter Agony, shedding
Tear

Tears for the Sins I have committed, and to expiate by so sensible a Grief those criminal Pleasures to which I have abandoned myself. Dear Lord! by thy Agony and bloody Sweat, pardon my past Ingratitudes, and make me more faithful to my Duty for the Time to come, that thy sacred Blood may not be shed in vain for me.



LEANDER JAMES LEANDER JAMES LEANDER

W E D N E S D A Y

In Holy Week.

The G O S P E L, or P A S S I O N.

St. L U K E xxii. and xxiii. 66.

AND as soon as it was Day, the Elders of the People, and the Chief Priests and Scribes met together, and they brought him before their Council saying : If thou be the Christ tell us. 67. And he said to them : if I should tell you, you will not believe me. 68. And if I ask you, you will not answer, nor let me go. 69. But hereafter the Son of Man shall be sitting on the Right-hand of the Power of God. 70. Then said they all, art thou the Son of God? Who said; You say that I am. 71. And they said, what need we any further Testimony? For we ourselves have heard it from

his own Mouth. 1. And the whole Multitude of them rising up, led him to *Pilate*. 2. And they began to accuse him, saying: We have found this Man perverting our Nation, and forbidding to give Tribute to *Cæsar*, and saying that he is Christ the King. 3. And *Pilate* asked him saying: Art thou the King of the *Jews*? But he answering said, Thou sayest it. 4. And *Pilate* said to the Chief Priests, and to the Multitude: I find no Cause in this Man. 5. But they were more earnest, saying: He stirreth up the People teaching throughout all *Judæa*, beginning from *Galilee* to this Place. 6. And *Pilate* hearing of *Galilee*, asked if the Man was of *Galilee*. 7. And when he understood that he was of *Herod's* Jurisdiction, he sent him away to *Herod*, who was also in those Days at *Jerusalem*. 8. And *Herod* seeing *Jesus*, was very glad, for he was desirous of a long Time to see him, because he heard many Things of him, and he hoped to see some Miracle wrought by him. 9. And he questioned him in many Words; but he answered him Nothing. 10. And the Chief Priests and the Scribes stood by, earnestly accusing him. 11. And *Herod* with his Guard despised him, and mocked him, putting on him a white Garment, and sent him back to *Pilate*. 12. And *Herod* and *Pilate* became Friends that Day, for before they were Enemies one to another. 13. And *Pilate* calling together the Chief Priests and Magistrates, and the People. 14. Said to them: You have presented unto me this Man, as one perverting

perverting the People, and behold examining him before you, I find no Cause in this Man, in those Things which you lay to his Charge. 15. Nor hath *Herod*; for I sent you to him; and behold nothing worthy of Death is done to him. 16. I will chastise him therefore, and release him. 17. Now he was of Necessity, to release unto them one upon the Feast-Day. 18. But the whole Multitude cried out together, Away with this Man, and release unto us *Barabbas*. 19. Who for a certain Sedition made in the City, and for Murder, had been thrown into Prison.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

On Jesus before Annas, Caiphaz, Pilate and Herod.

The Saviour of the World being by the Treason of *Judas* delivered into the Hands of his Enemies, soon felt the cruel Effects of their Malice armed with Power, in the barbarous Treatment they gave him. Binding him fast with Cords, as the most criminal Malefactor, they rudely drag him from the Garden of *Gethsemani* to *Jerusalem*; and in the first Place carry him to *Annas*, Father-in-law to *Caiphaz*, the High-Priest, where he underwent a thousand Indignities, in hearing his divine Doctrine ridiculed, and his sacred Person blasphemed, being treated as an Impostor, and Seducer of the People.

People. Under all these Outrages and Insults, the Holy Jesus behaved with incomparable Patience and Meekness; and after having been for some Time abused by *Anas*, and those with him, he was sent to the House of *Caiphas*, where the Elders and *Scribes*, his declared Enemies, were met together to consult how they might put him to a cruel and ignominious Death. Their Malice and Fury transported them so far, as to treat him with the utmost Contempt, and to set aside all Form or regular Method of Judgment, as thinking of nothing but how to satiate their Malice, and overwhelm him with Affronts and Indignities. No Wonder they set aside all regular Proceedings against him, as having not so much as the Shadow of a Crime to lay to his Charge, so Innocent and Holy had been his Life, so blameless and circumspect his Conduct: They were forced to have Recourse to false Witnesses; and those Wretches who, by the Law ought to have been stoned to Death, they hired to swear against him: But these Witnesses not agreeing in their Testimony, nor proving any Thing, the High Priest asked our Saviour many Questions, to which he made no Reply. *Caiphas* then adjured him to declare, whether he was the Son of God. Christ, who was silent in his own Cause, when the Honour of his eternal Father was concerned, spoke freely, and confessed he was. The impious High Priest thought he had gained his Point, and with a Show of Zeal rent his Garments, and cried out: *Blasphemy*,

no Need of more Witnesses: And asked the Rest what they thought? Who immediately concurred with him, and pronounced Jesus guilty of Death.

No sooner had the High Priest and wicked Elders pronounced this unjust Sentence against Jesus, but the furious Rabble began to treat him with all the Excess of Cruelty their Malice could invent. They spit upon his adorable Face; they buffeted and blindfolded him, and then, in Mockery and Derision, bid him tell them who had struck him. This inhuman and barbarous Treatment, accompanied with their confused Cries, their injurious Words and Actions, exceeds our Comprehension, so outrageous was their Fury. If we compare the Grandeur and Majesty of our suffering Saviour, with the Baseness of those, who thus injuriously treated him, what are we capable of, but Admiration and Silence? especially if we consider the Patience wherewith he suffered all these ignominious Affronts, and Love he had for those who so barbarously treated him. Like an innocent Lamb among so many furious Wolves, so was our most mild and meek Redeemer among the Multitude. He opened not his Mouth, and when he was reviled, reviled not again.

Though the High Priest and Elders had thus pronounced Christ guilty of Death, they could not of themselves execute the Sentence, as not having Authority over Life and Death; that Power being taken from them by the *Romans*,

to

to whom they were subject. But resolving to omit nothing in their Power, to accomplish their wicked Designs, they met and consulted how they might prevail upon the *Roman* President to consent to their Desires: And having resolved to lay against him the most criminal Accusations, and represent him as a Disturber of the publick Peace, a Mover of Sedition, and one who forbad paying Tribute to *Cæsar*, they led him, bound, to *Pontius Pilate*, then Governor of *Judea* for the *Roman* Emperor. Thus is the sovereign Judge of Heaven and Earth dragged to the profane Tribunal of an earthly President.

Pilate asked several Questions of our Blessed Lord, and soon perceived by his meek and mild Behaviour, from his admirable Silence under such false and criminal Accusations, from the Answers he gave him about Truth, and his being a King, that he was innocent of all those black Crimes the *Jews* laid to his Charge, and therefore was desirous to set him at Liberty: But the High Priest and Elders were urgent in their Clamours against him, representing him as a dangerous Seducer of the People, one, who had perverted them from *Galilee* to *Jerusalem*. By mentioning *Galilee* the President came to understand that Christ was of King *Herod*'s Jurisdiction, and therefore sent him to that Prince, who was then at *Jerusalem*. *Herod* was glad to see our Saviour brought before him, as having heard much of his wonderful Miracles, and thought he would work one
in

his Presence; but the curious Monarch was disappointed. Christ took no Notice of him, nor answered one Word to all his Questions, and the many Accusations of the High Priests. This made *Herod* esteem him a Fool, and as such deride him, and having ordered him to be cloathed in a white Garment, in great Scorn and Derision sent him back to *Pontius Pilate*. The Governor would have been willingly freed from any farther Concern about Jesus, but could not. The High Priest insisted upon his being condemned, as guilty of Death. *Pilate* as warmly maintains his Innocence, and that he might release him, and to satisfy them, offers first to inflict some Punishment upon him. This will not satisfy them. He then proposes to release Jesus in Honour of their Paschal Solemnity; but the *Jews*, at the Instigation of the High Priests, desire *Barabbas* may be set free, who was then in Prison on the Account of Sedition and Murder. As for Jesus, they all cried out: *Take him away, Crucify him, Crucify him.* Thus a notorious Criminal is preferred before the innocent and holy Jesus; and the Author of Life unjustly required to be put to Death.

No Wonder if this unworthy Preference excites our Indignation against those who made it. But, we shall do well to bring our Reflections nearer Home, and consider our own Conduct, and examine, if, while we condemn the *Jews* for preferring *Barabbas* before Jesus, we do not pronounce a just Sentence against ourselves. It is to be feared there are many
Christians

Christians, who, though in reading the Passion of our Blessed Saviour, they conceive a just Horror, at the Indignity put upon him by having a Murderer put in Competition with, and preferred before him; yet consider not how near a Resemblance there is in their own Behaviour, to that of the *Jews*. This may appear strange. What! Christians, who believe in, and adore Jesus Christ; who honour, and pity his Sufferings, to join with his cruel Enemies, and cry out: *Not this Man, but Barabbas!* Be astonished, *O Heavens!* Alas! it is too true. What other Choice does the wretched Worldling make, whose whole Desires and Endeavours are for the Riches and Enjoyments of Life, for the obtaining of which he gives up his Conscience, his Duty, and all Regard to the Happiness of Heaven? The World is a *Barabbas*, and he prefers it before God. He cries out not Jesus, his Poverty, his Mortification, his Self-denial; but *Barabbas*. Give me the World, its Riches, its Pomp and Show, its Liberties and Pleasures. The Proud and Ambitious who so inordinately seek Honour and Grandeur, and reject the Humility of the Gospel, demand *Barabbas*, and set aside Jesus. The Libertine who is so fond of sensual Pleasures, and minds nothing but satisfying his inordinate and irregular Desires, makes this unworthy and detestable Choice. In a Word, whoever prefers temporal Interest and Advantage to his Duty; or either for Pleasure or Profit offends God, does thus prefer *Barabbas* to Jesus Christ;
Every

Every Sin wilfully committed, involves us in the Guilt of the *Jews*, or rather makes us infinitely more culpable. When they chose *Barabbas* before Christ, they did not believe in him, nor had he then died for them. They looked upon him as a Deceiver and Impostor. But we say, we believe in him as the Son of God: We acknowledge that he died for us, and yet miserable that we are! we prefer the wretched and criminal Enjoyments of the World before our Duty to him. We rather chuse to hazard the Loss of God's Favour and Grace, with the happy Consequences of it, in eternal Happiness, than to deny the irregular Desires of our inordinate Passions. Thus we prefer *Barabbas* to *Jesus*. Thus the World and Sin triumph, and Christ is crucified. Detestable Choice! Fatal Preference, truly deserving the Flames of Hell to punish it!

A S P I R A T I O N S.

Adorable Saviour of the World! with what Confusion ought I to appear before thee, having so often rejected thee for the vain and trifling Satisfactions of this World? How often have I resisted, and refused to hearken to thy Divine Calls, and the sweet Inspirations of thy holy Spirit? Thou desirest to reign in my Heart, O sovereign Good, and true Life of my Soul! and I have given the Preference to Sin. Ah! why am I not drowned in Tears? How dare I presume to appear in thy Presence, after so

base

bare a Choice? Pardon, dear Lord, the Affronts I have so often put upon thee. May that Mercy, which moved thee to suffer so much for us, incline thee now to have Pity on and forgive me. Behold me, O Lord, prostrate at thy sacred Feet, and renouncing to all that I have hitherto loved more than thee. I once more resolve to be faithful to thee, and beg the Assistance of thy Grace to keep inviolably these my Resolutions.

O *Jesus*, my adorable Saviour! what Sentiments of Pity and Compassion ought to fill my Breast, when I behold and consider thee thus injuriously dealt with? Thy whole Life was one continued Series of doing Good, even to those who persecuted thee. Thou never didst, nor was capable of doing Harm, and yet art presented before *Pontius Pilate*, as guilty of the most flagitious Crimes. O my innocent *Jesus*! I compassionate thee under this unjust Treatment, and which thou didst so patiently submit to out of Love for me, and that thou mightest suffer the Punishment due to my Crimes.

O excessive Love of thee my dear Redeemer! O Christ the Son of the living God! Thou art the sovereign Judge of the Living and the Dead! who didst permit thyself to be presented before the Tribunal of *Pontius Pilate*. I adore thee, I praise and bless thee for this thy Bounty and Condescension. What a Confusion to me, who so often refuse to submit to thee, and who behave myself with so much Haughtiness and Impatience under Contradictions! O *Jesus*!
make

make me by thy Grace more like to thee. Help me to keep under and repress all Motions of corrupt Nature, all interior Resentment and Disquiet, that I may patiently submit to all the Dispensations of thy holy Will. Purify and cleanse my Heart from all Passion, Murmuring and Repining. I bow down and adore thee. I abandon myself, and all that I have totally to thee, that I may live only in thee and for thee.



THURSDAY



T H U R S D A Y

In Holy Week.

The G O S P E L, St. *John* xiii. 1.

BEFORE the Festival Day of the Pasche Jesus knowing that his Hour was come, that he should pass out of this World to the Father; having loved his own who were in the World, he loved them unto the End. 2. And when Supper was done, (the Devil having now put into the Heart of *Judas Iscariot*, the Son of *Simon*, to betray him). 3. Knowing that the Father had given him all Things into his Hands, and that he came from God, and goeth to God. 4. He rises from Supper, and layeth aside his Garments, and having taken a Towel, girded himself. 5. After that he putteth Water into a Basen, and began to wash the

the Feet of his Disciples, and to wipe them with the Towel wherewith he was girt. 6. He cometh therefore to *Simon Peter*. And *Peter* said to him: Lord, dost thou wash my Feet? 7. *Jesus* answered, and said to him: What I do, thou knowest not now, but hereafter thou shalt know. 8. *Peter* saith to him: Thou shalt never wash my Feet: *Jesus* answered him; If I wash thee not, thou shalt have no Part with me. 9. *Simon Peter* saith to him: Lord, not my Feet only, but also my Hands and my Head. 10. *Jesus* saith to him: He that is washed, needeth not but to wash his Feet, but is clean wholly. And you are clean, but not all. 11. For he knew who he was, that would betray him; therefore he said: You are not all clean. 12. Then after he had washed their Feet, and taken his Garments; being set down again, he said to them: Know you what I have done to you. 13. You call me Master, and Lord; and you say well; for so I am. 14. If I then being Lord; and Master, have washed your Feet; you also ought to wash one another's Feet. 15. For I have given you an Example, that as I have done to you, so you do also.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

Admirable Example of Humility and Condescension, which the Son of God shows in the Gospel of this Day! He stoops to the lowest Office of a menial Servant, and washes the Feet

Feet of his own Disciples, even those of *Judas* that false Apostle, who then had formed a Design to betray him into the Hands of his Enemies. Such a Sight may justly fill us with Admiration and Surprize, but something more than that is designed by it: And the Church this Day reads it, to put us in Mind of that Purity, Humility and Charity wherewith we should approach the holy Altar, and receive the adorable Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood; the sacred Institution of which the same Church this Day commemorates: And which was instituted by our Blessed Lord as a standing Memorial and Pledge of that Love he had for us; according to what the Evangelist observes: *Having loved his that were in the World, he loved them to the End.* Nor could he give us a greater, or more conspicuous Proof of his Love, than to give us himself, his own true and real Body and Blood, in the holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, which he has established in the Church, for the Benefit of the Faithful, to remain to the End of the World. Considering, which we may justly cry out with the Psalmist, *The merciful and gracious Lord hath made a Memorial of his wonderful Works; he hath given Meat to them who fear him,* Psal. cx. This is that Mystery of Love and Goodness, wherein we receive the Body and Blood of Christ; and by which our Souls are nourished to eternal Life. That Christ does give us his true Body and Blood, we cannot have a stronger Proof than his own Words, in the Institution of this
Mystery,

Mystery. He assured the Apostles that his Body was Flesh indeed, and his Blood Drink indeed, *John vi.* And told the *Jews*, that unless they eat his Flesh, and drank his Blood, they should not have Life in them. After so plain and positive a Declaration, to question or deny the real Presence, must be the Height of Pride, Arrogance or Prejudice. But not to launch out into Controversy; believing the Truth of this adorable Mystery, let us turn our Thoughts to consider the Dispositions our Souls ought to be in when we approach the Altar, to receive the sacred Body and Blood of Christ. What they are we may learn from the Gospel of this Day; and from our Saviour's washing the Feet of his Disciples.

The first is Purity. Our Blessed Lord signifies this by washing his Apostles Feet: And when *St. Peter* refused out of Humility, and Respect for his Divine Master: *Lord, thou shalt never wash my Feet.* Jesus answered: *Unless I wash thee, thou shalt have no Share with me.* Unless we are washed from all Stains and Filth of Sin, we must not expect any Share in Jesus, nor to be worthy Partakers of his Body and Blood. For this Reason, *St. Paul* says: *Whoever shall eat of this Bread, or drink of the Chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord. But let a Man prove himself; and so let him eat of that Bread, and drink of the Chalice,* 1 Cor. xi. The Purity then with which we must approach the Holy Altar, consists in hav-
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ing our Souls cleansed from all Sin by a sincere and hearty Sorrow for them; and it is in the Waters of Contrition and Repentance, that we must make ourselves clean. For this God has instituted the holy Sacrament of Confession, wherein the Priests, the Ministers of Christ, wash as it were our Feet, our Hands and our Head. God ordained in the old Law, many legal Purifications to be observed by those who came to offer Sacrifice to him; and with greater Reason he requires that we should purify our Souls when we partake of the great Sacrifice of the new Law, of which all the ceremonious Offerings of the *Mosaick* Institute, were only Types and Figures. But in thus purifying our Souls, we must take great Care to do it thoroughly, and effectually, and not deceive ourselves by outward Forms and Ceremony. *Judas* had his Feet washed by our Saviour, but he was not made clean. If we make a Show of washing ourselves, by going to Confession, but carry not thither sincere Contrition and Repentance, we may be seemingly washed, but not really made clean. Then, may our Contrition be stiled sincere, when it causes in us an Abhorrence, and Detestation of Sin; when we grieve for having offended so good a God, and when our Sorrow produces a sincere Purpose and Resolution not to offend him any more, but carefully to avoid all Sin, and the Occasions of it. Thus are we to purify our Souls, and make them, in some Measure, fit Habitations for the holy and adorable

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ble *Jesus*, whose sacred Body we receive in the blessed Sacrament.

Another necessary Disposition when we go to receive the Blessed Sacrament, is Humility. This we may learn from St. *Peter's* Behaviour in this Gospel. Beholding his divine Master at his Feet, about to wash them, he cries out with Astonishment and Surprize : *Lord, dost thou wash my Feet?* And though our Saviour told him he should know the Reason of it afterwards, he was not satisfied, but said : *Lord thou shalt never wash my Feet.* No, my dear and adorable Master, it is not an Office that becomes thee, who art *Christ, the Son of the living God*, Matt. xvi. It is my Business to wash thy sacred Feet, for I am thy Disciple, and thou art my Lord : I am thy Servant, and thou my Master : *Thou shalt never never wash my Feet.* These were Sentiments of true Humility, and worthy the Prince of the Apostles. Such humble Thoughts we ought to be filled with when we approach the Altar : And, with a deep Sense of our own Unworthiness, say with the Centurion : *Lord I am not worthy thou shouldst enter into my House*, Matt. viii. Ah, Lord ! I am altogether unworthy that thou shouldst enter into the miserable House of my sinful Soul. It is, without Doubt, to shew, and express this Humility, that the Church puts those Words of the Centurion into our Mouths immediately before we receive the sacred Body of *Jesus Christ*. This Humility which we are to bring with us to the holy Table, must be

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not only interior, but also exterior. It must be in our Heart by sincere Sentiments of our great Misery, Unworthiness, and Nothing, and must appear outwardly, by a modest and devout Behaviour; in such Sort, as our interior Humility must produce the exterior; and the exterior be a Mark of that in our Heart. Thus disposed we shall be fit to receive him, who rejects the Proud, and gives Grace to the Humble, *Jac. iv.*

To Purity and Humility, must be joined Charity, if we desire to approach the sacred Table as we ought. *I have given you an Example*, says Jesus Christ to the Apostles, after he had washed their Feet, *That as I have done to you, so you also may do the like.* It was not only an Example of Humility, but of Love likewise. Charity, or Love for one another, is what he particularly recommends to his Disciples and Followers. *By this, shall Men know that you are my Disciples, if you have Love one for another*, John xiii. Hence it is, that St. Paul calls Love *the fulfilling of the Law*, Rom. xiii. And as the Blessed Eucharist is a standing Mark of God's Love to us, it is very reasonable that we approach to it with sincere Love, both of God and our Neighbour. Can we behold Jesus Christ in this adorable Mystery of Love, giving himself to us to be the Food of our Souls? Can we reflect upon what he has done for us, all which is so wonderfully abridged, and represented to us in these holy Mysteries, and not make him some Return of Love? Far

be such Ingratitude, such Insensibility, from the Hearts and Minds of Christians ! Shall the Flames of that Divine Love which burnt in the Heart of *Jesus*, not be able to warm our Breasts ? Shall we behold him daily immolating himself, and mystically dying for us, on the Altars, and not be ourselves even consumed in the Fire of reciprocal and ardent Love ? If Love begets Love ; and we ought to love in Proportion as we are loved ? How ought we to love him who has so loved us, and thus wonderfully manifests his Love to us. Oh, let us love him the best we can, with all our Hearts, and with all our Minds, and with all our Strength : for we can never love him too much, nor as he deserves to be loved. And one of the best Proofs we can give of our Love, is to love our Neighbour. Hence, far be all Hatred, Animosity, Grudging, or Ill-will to any one, from the Breasts of those who draw near to this Altar of Love. Nor shall we ever be fit, or worthy to receive Jesus Christ in the holy Sacrament, if we bear Hatred and Malice against any one ; or refuse to pardon, and be reconciled to those who have offended us. And it is the positive Command of Jesus Christ : *If thou offerest thy Gift at the Altar, and there shalt remember that thy Brother hath any Thing against thee, leave there thy Offering before the Altar, and first go to be reconciled to thy Brother, and then thou shalt come and offer thy Gift*, Matt. v. By this is signified that we must be in Peace, and Reconciliation with all the World, with our greatest Enemies,

Enemies, at least on our Parts; when we dispose ourselves to receive Jesus Christ in the holy Eucharist.

These are the Dispositions our Souls must be in at that Time; and thus shall we be fit and worthy to entertain the Son of God in the House of our Soul, who will then communicate to us all his spiritual Graces, by which we shall be able to grow and increase in his Love. Let us thus dispose ourselves to receive him, that we may dwell in him, and he in us.

A S P I R A T I O N S.

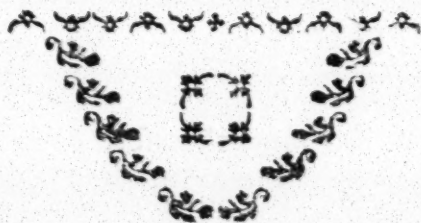
Glory be to thee, O *Jesus*, Saviour of the World! Glory be to thee for that ineffable Love and Bounty thou hast shown to us, in the Institution of this holy and adorable Sacrament. I firmly believe the Truth of this sacred Mystery, and that thou dost therein give us thy true and real Body and Blood. Excite in my Soul, a vehement Desire after this heavenly Food. Grant that I may always receive thee with ardent Love and Affection; with profound Humility, and a great Purity of Body and Soul. O Fire, ever burning and never wasting! enflame my Heart with Love of thee. Thou camest to bring Fire upon Earth; and, O Lord, cause it now to burn in me. O King of Heaven and Earth, thou art rich in Mercy, and I am poor and needy. Supply all my Wants out of the Treasure of thy Goodness. May thy Love wholly possess my

Soul, that I may die to the World, and live to thee, who for Love of me didst die upon the Cross. Let me never be any more ungrateful to thee, or abuse thy Mercy. O come now, and give thyself to me, unite me so closely to thee, that nothing may be able to divide, or separate me from thee, my God, and my All.

O *Jesus*, my God, of infinite Power, infinite Purity and Holiness! What am I but a poor miserable wretched and unworthy Sinner, Worm of the Earth, vile Dust and Ashes? And yet thou vouchsafest to give thyself to me, sweet Saviour of my Soul! Since thou art thus pleased to shew thy Love to me, add one Favour more, dear Lord! and grant that I may appear in thy Presence, cloathed with a nuptial Garment. It is the earnest Desire of my Heart to come to thy holy Altar, all inflamed with seraphick Love and sincere Devotion, when I am to receive thee my God. O Fire! O Flames of Divine Love, burn and consume all Coldness and Tepidity. O that I could appear in thy Presence, Divine *Jesus*, and kneel before thee as the Cherubim, Seraphim, and all the Blessed Spirits of Heaven appear before thee.

O how adorable are thy Counsels, O Lord! how strangely endearing are the Ways of thy Love! Thou comest, O Fountain of Mercy! Fountain of Living Waters! to overflow the Earth with the Riches of thy Bounty. Water, I beseech thee, the dry and barren Soil of my Heart. Open those Cataracts, and let thy
sweet

sweet Streams flow abundantly, and make the sterile Land of my Soul fruitful in good Works, and Love of thee. O true and only Happiness of my Soul! Come, and unite me so close to thee, that nothing may be able to divide, or separate me from thee; totally transform and change me into thee, that I may live, not I, but thou in me, and I in thee.



GOOD



GOOD FRIDAY.

The GOSPEL, or PASSION.

St. JOHN, xix. Ver. I.

THEN *Pilate* therefore took *Jesus*, and scourged him. 2. And the Soldiers wreathing a Crown of Thorns, put it upon his Head: And they put on him a purple Garment. 3. And they came to him, and said: Hail King of the *Jews*, and they gave him Blows. 4. *Pilate* therefore went forth again, and saith to them: Behold I bring him forth unto you, that you may know that I find no Cause in him. 5. (*Jesus* therefore came forth, bearing the Crown of Thorns, and the Purple Garment) and he saith to them: Behold the Man. 6. When the Chief Priests therefore, and the Servants had seen him, they cried out, saying: Crucify, Crucify him. *Pilate* saith to them:

them: Take him you and crucify him: for I find no Cause in him. 7. The *Jews* answered him: We have a Law, and according to that Law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God. 8. When *Pilate* therefore heard these Words, he was more afraid. 9. And he went again into the Palace; and saith to *Jesus*: Whence art thou? But *Jesus* gave him no Answer. 10. *Pilate* therefore saith to him: Speakest thou not to me? Knowest thou not, that I have Power to crucify thee? 11. *Jesus* answered: Thou wouldst not have any Power against me unless it were given thee from above: therefore he that hath delivered me to thee, hath the greater Sin. 12. And from thenceforth *Pilate* sought to release him; but the *Jews* cried out, saying: If thou release this Man, thou art not *Cæsar's* Friend; for every one that maketh himself a King, contradicteth *Cæsar*. 13. Now when *Pilate* had heard these Words, brought forth *Jesus*, and sat down in the Judgment Seat in the Place called *Lithostrotus*, and in *Hebrew*, *Gabbatha*. 14. And it was the Parasceve of the Pasche; about the sixth Hour, and he saith to the *Jews*: Behold your King. 15. But they cried out; away with him, away with him, crucify him: *Pilate* saith to them; shall I crucify your King? The Chief Priests answered: We have no King, but *Cæsar*. 16. Then he delivered him unto them for to be crucified. And they took *Jesus*, and led him forth. 17. And bearing his own Cross, he went forth to that Place,

which is *Calvary*, but in *Hebrew*, *Golgotha*, 18. Where they crucified him, and with him two others, one on each Side, and *Jesus* in the Midst.

REFLECTIONS.

On Jesus scourged and crucified.

The sad and moving Spectacle which is this Day presented as the Subject of our pious Thoughts, is of that Nature, as to require, rather our Tears, than our Words. It demands more the Eloquence of the Heart, than the Tongue; and we may better adore, in an humble Silence, what we cannot express, or in our Thoughts conceive a just Idea of. Such is the Passion; such are the Sufferings and Crucifixion of *Jesus Christ*, our adorable Redeemer. Having, in the Course of this Holy Week, waited upon, and accompanied him, by our devout Meditations, through the several and different Stages of his Passion, we are now come to the last Scene of his cruel Sufferings, to behold him unjustly condemned to a cruel and ignominious Death, which cruel Sentence was executed upon him by the *Jews*, with all the aggravating Circumstances of Scorn and Barbarity. It is this the afflicted Spouse of *Christ*, the Church, represents to us, in a lively Manner, by the lugubrious Ceremonies of this Day's sad and solemn Office. With her, let us wait upon *Jesus* to Mount *Calvary*; let us follow him,

him, bearing his Cross till he arrives at that Place, where he expires in the Midst of those Torments the Love of us caused him to suffer. But first, let us stay a while, and consider what passed at *Pilate's* Judgment Seat, where the High Priests had brought *Jesus* bound; and in the Pretor's Hall. The malicious Enemies of our Saviour had accused him to the *Roman* President, of many grievous Crimes; and were very urgent, that he should be put to Death. *Pilate*, who saw that they accused him out of Envy and Malice, was convinced of his Innocence and desired to release him. This he could easily have done, in Quality of Judge, and by the supreme Power he was vested with; and, in that Quality, ought to have maintained the Cause of oppressed Innocence, and to have delivered our Blessed Lord from the Hands of his Enemies. But, poor, weak Man! he had not the Courage to do this, for fear of disobliging the Chief Priests. He offered to free him in Honour of their Paschal Solemnity; but giving them their Choice, either to have *Jesus*, or *Barabbas* delivered, he put it into their Power to demand that Christ might be crucified; and they did so. *Not this Man, but Barabbas*. When he asked, what he should do with *Jesus*? they cried out: *Crucify him, Crucify him*. To satisfy, in some Measure, and abate this their Fury, *Pilate* gives Orders, that *Jesus* should be scourged. This calls us into the Pretor's Hall, where we shall see these Orders executed with the utmost Cruelty and Barbarity.

The

The holy Evangelists say no more of this cruel Flagellation, than that *Jesus* was scourged. Let us imitate their Silence, and speak only by our Tears, at the Sight of this tragic Scene. Let us draw a Curtain over this afflicting Sight, and revolve in our Minds what our Tongues cannot express. We may represent him to our Thoughts stripped of his Cloaths, and exposed naked to the View of the insolent Soldiers, who binding him to a Pillar, call together the whole Cohort, or Band, and discharge upon his tender and delicate Body, all that Rage and Malice could inspire. We may behold our adorable Saviour rent and torn by cruel Whips and Scourges, till he becomes one entire Wound from Head to Feet. We may represent this holy Victim, swimming in his own Blood; and, once more, leave that to our Eyes, which our Tongues cannot express, and speak only by our compassionate Sighs and Tears; or, if we choose to speak, let it be in the Words of *Caip'as* to the Jews: *What do you think*, Matt. xxvi. Let every one put this Question to himself: What do you think of *Jesus* in this sad Condition? of *Jesus* thus covered with Blood and Wounds? Can you, after such a Sight, ever offend him? Can you refuse him all the Affections of your Heart?

This cruel Treatment, barbarous as it was, did not satisfy these Butchers. They went beyond their Orders, and having tired themselves with tormenting our Saviour, they invent new Torment for him. Plating a Crown of sharp
Thorns,

Thorns, they put it upon his sacred Head, and force the Prickles into his Flesh, putting him thereby to a most exquisite and cruel Pain. And, as if this was not enough, they add Scorn to their Cruelty, and Derision to their Barbarity. They cloath him in an old cast off Purple Garment, put a Reed into his Hand for a Sceptre, and kneeling down in Scorn and Derision, say to him: *Hail, King of the Jews?* Having thus abused him, they lead him from the Prætor's Hall to *Pilate*, who brought him forth in that sad Condition, and presented him to the *Jews*, saying: *Behold the Man.* But they, far from being moved with Compassion at seeing him in that sad State, cried out: *Crucify him, Crucify him.* *Pilate* still willing to save him, says to them: *Shall I crucify your King?* They reply, *We have no King but Cæsar.* If thou lett'st this Man go, thou art not Cæsar's Friend. Plainly intimating, that if he did release our Saviour, they would accuse him at the *Roman Court*, for favouring the Enemies of the Emperor: And this prevails. *Pilate*, fearful of incurring *Cæsar's* Displeasure, consents to their Desire; and out of a base Fear commits an Act of the highest Injustice. He acknowledged the Innocence of *Jesus*, and that he found no Fault in him, yet condemns him to be crucified. True Picture of human Weakness! of a criminal Attachment to present Interest! to serve which, how many betray their Consciences, sell Justice, and violate all the Rules of Equity and Right.

The

The Son of God being thus delivered up to the Will of his Enemies, they hurry him from the President's House, and having a Cross ready, put it upon his weak and wounded Shoulders, and lead him out of *Jerusalem* to crucify him. The most meek and holy *Jesus* patiently submits to the heavy Load, and like another *Isaac*, carrying the Wood whereon he was to be sacrificed, summons up all his weak Forces, and marches on attended by the Chief Priests and Soldiers; but spent by the Blood he had lost in the cruel Usage they had given him, he faints by the Way, and sinks under the heavy Burthen. The barbarous *Jews* urge and force him to go on, but finding he was not able, they oblige *Simon* the *Cyrenean* to help him to carry the Cross; not out of Pity to *Jesus Christ*, but for fear he should die too soon, and before he had suffered what they designed to inflict upon him. At length, being arrived at Mount *Calvary*, they strip him of his Cloaths, and fasten him to the Cross, piercing his Hands and Feet with hard and rough Nails. And then hoisting up the Cross, and pitching it with Violence into the Ground, by the Rudeness of the Shock make his Wounds bleed afresh, and put him to more sensible Pain. In this Manner the Saviour of the World hangs three Hours suffering most cruel Torments, exposed naked to the sharp Air, and sharper Reproaches and Insults of his Enemies, who not content with the Cruelty they had exercised upon his Body, endeavour by their horrid Blasphemies and picquant Mockery

ery to torment and wound his holy Soul; reproaching him with calling himself the Son of God, and bidding him come down from the Cross, that they might believe in him.

It is some Comfort in Affliction, to have any Friends to pity our Sufferings: but how few did *Jesus* find! His Disciples and Followers had forsaken him. He saw standing by his Cross, his Virgin Mother, the beloved Disciple, and *Mary Magdalen*. But the Sight of them and their Grief, only increased his own Trouble and Sorrow. It is some Consolation to be pitied by those who suffer with us; but our blessed Saviour was reviled and blasphemed by those who were crucified with him. Add to this his great interior Desolation, which forced him to cry out; *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me*, Matt. xxvi. Not that the Divinity abandoned the Humanity of *Jesus Christ*, being hypostatically united to it, he always enjoyed the beatific Vision. But at that Time he was without those interior Consolations, which might comfort and support him in his cruel Sufferings. And this may be said to be the most sensible and afflicting of all his Pains; which he having endured with an inimitable Patience, burning with Love of those for whom he suffered, he cried out: *Sitio. I thirst*, John xix. expressing thereby not only his great corporal Thirst, and the Pain it gave him, but also his much greater spiritual Thirst for the Salvation of Mankind. With the same Ardour of Love for Sinners, he again cried out: *Consummatum est.*

est. It is finished; the glorious and arduous Work of Man's Redemption is finished. *Father into thy Hands I commend my Spirit.* And with these Words, bowing down his Head, he gave up the Ghost and expired. Thus died the Author of Life, the Redeemer of Mankind, the Son of the Living God, the Prince of Peace, the Father of future Ages, our Comforter, our Help and our only Hope. Thus, like a good Shepherd, did he fulfil what he had said of himself: *I lay down my Life for my Sheep*, John x. Thus did he die for us, and to teach us how to die holily, that is, with Submission and Resignation to the Will of God, and to give back willingly into the Hands of our Creator, that Soul which he gave us. *O may my Soul die the Death of the Righteous, and may my last End be like his*, Numb. xxiii.

Having thus seen what, and how much our Blessed Lord suffered for us. Having beheld the various and cruel Torments he was pleased to undergo for our Sakes; what Sentiments ought the Consideration of them to produce in our Hearts? What are the practical Lessons we are to learn from his Behaviour in his Passion, and which ought to be the Fruit of our meditating on the Sufferings of the Son of God. This the Church recommends to us; and for this she lays before us the Mysteries of this holy Time. Let us cast our Eyes then back upon what we have already viewed, and attentively consider what every Circumstance and Part of our Saviour's Passion teaches us. From
his

his Behaviour at the Judgment-seat of *Pilate*; his admirable Silence under all the false Accusations of his Enemies; we may learn to be patient and meek under all Provocations and Injuries: Not to give Way to Anger and Resentment, or any Motions of corrupt Nature prompting us to Revenge. If we defend ourselves, let it be with Mildness and a charitable Spirit to those who injure us, and no further than Justice and Equity to ourselves, or others may require. To give Way to Heat and Passion upon every little Contradiction; for every Word, spoke perhaps thro' Inadvertency and without Malice, is far from that Meekness and Patience, our Blessed Lord has given us an Example of. From the Behaviour of *Pilate* in condemning Jesus Christ unjustly and against his own Conscience, we may learn the sad Effects of being biassed by temporal Interest, and letting that prevail over our Duty. At first he seemed resolute, and determined to set Jesus free; but when the Chief Priests threatened to complain of him to the Emperor, he yielded; and out of a base Motive of Fear to lose the Favour of his Prince, gave his Consent to the most cruel and unjust Demand that ever was made. It were to be wished he had none, or fewer Followers. Alas! there are many, who when their private Interest or Advantage are not concerned, seem zealous enough for Truth and Justice, but when that is to be conserved or gained, sacrifice Conscience, Honour, Equity and Truth to those Idols, and
give

give up what they once seemed strenuous Defenders of, thereby, like *Pilate*, condemning Jesus to be crucified, for Fear they should suffer any thing themselves. But, how contrary is this to the Spirit of the Gospel ! How little Reason have such to call themselves Christians, or Followers of Jesus Christ ! From the Charity of Jesus Christ, in praying for those who so barbarously crucified him ; we are taught the great Lesson, of praying for our Enemies, and those who injure and persecute us. From his recommending his Spirit into the Hands of his heavenly Father, we are instructed to commit our last Moments to God, and make him the ultimate End of all our Desires ; and to let it be our only Care, so to live in his Fear, that we may die in his Favour, which we shall undoubtedly do, if we endeavour to practise these holy Lessons Christ reads to us from the Cross, and who ought to be the Model of all our Actions.

God, heretofore, said to *Moses* : *Work according to the Pattern which was given thee in the Mount*, *Exod. xxi.* The Pattern which we ought to follow, and by which we are to work in raising a spiritual Building, and making our Souls Temples of the Living God, is here set to us in the Mountain of *Calvary*. Let us look up therefore to Jesus the Author, and Finisher of our Faith, who underwent the Sufferings of the Cross, despised the Shame of it, and now sitteth at the Right-hand of God, *Heb. xii.* Let him be the Model of all our Actions,

Actions, and considering what he has done, and suffered to make Atonements for our Sins, learn to be careful how we commit it. Let his sacred Passion give us an extream Horror of that, which is so displeasing to God, and which he punished so rigorously in the Person of his beloved Son Jesus Christ. If the View of those many and cruel Torments our Redeemer suffered, excites in us an Abhorrence of the barbarous Cruelty of the *Jews*; can we, at the same Time, take Part with them, or rather exceed them in their Cruelty, by renewing his Sufferings, trampling on his sacred Blood, and crucifying him again by Sin? However we may seem, or pretend to be unwilling to do this; in Reality, we are guilty of it, when we wilfully commit Sin. And as we are therein infinitely more culpable than the *Jews*, we must expect a much severer Punishment. But, if like good Christians, and faithful Followers of Christ, we walk after him in Observance of what he commands: If we follow him in the narrow Path of his holy Cross, it will lead us to eternal Life; and sharing with him, in his Sufferings here, we shall be Partakers of his Glory hereafter.

A S P I R A T I O N S.

O Jesus, my adorable Saviour, who didst suffer so many and cruel Torments for my Sake! What Returns of Praise and Thanksgiving shall I make to thee, for so much Love?

Dear

Dear Redeemer of my Soul! May the Memory of this thy Love always remain with me. May I never forget what thou hast done for me, nor any longer prove ungrateful and unkind, as hitherto, alas! I have been. Thou didst die for me: O that I might effectually die to Sin, to the World, to its Vanities and Follies, and to all Affection to them! Thou didst die, O my sweet and amiable Saviour! Thou hast shown thyself truly a good Shepherd, in giving thy Life for thy Sheep. O my God! have Mercy on me, and grant that in all Things I may truly please thee, and be willing at all Times to suffer and lay down my Life for the Love of thee. O my crucified Jesus! I adore and salute thy sacred Wounds, and humbly beg thou wouldst enflame my Heart with the Love of thee. O Sweetness of my Heart, and true Life of my Soul! Burn and consume me in the Flames of a most ardent Love. Transform and change me totally into thee, that nothing besides thee may live in me, O my Lord, and my God, my God and my All!

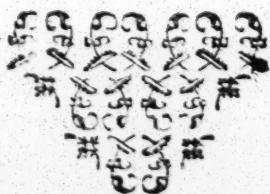
Hail sweet Jesus! Praise, Honour and Glory be to thee, O Christ, who vouchsafest to suffer this cruel and outrageous Treatment from thy own Creatures! I adore thee, O God of Love! O God of Patience, Mercy and Goodness! I adore thee covered with Wounds, dying in Torments the most cruel, and insulted, mocked and derided by thy cruel and implacable Enemies, who not content to have so barbarously

rously tormented thy sacred Body, by horrid Blasphemies, and injurious Reproaches, seek to afflict and torment thy holy Soul. They treat thee as an Impostor, thou who art eternal Truth. They bid thee come down from the Cross and save thyself, thou who in an Instant couldst destroy the whole Fabric of the World. Ah, Wretches! It is Love, stronger than all your Nails, that fixes Jesus on the Cross. Love crucified him, without which, all your Power had been in vain.

O my adorable Redeemer! O Life of my Soul! my Lord and my God! I am lost in the Contemplation of such Wonders of Love and Goodness. How great is thy Love! How invincible thy Patience! How insatiable thy Desire of Suffering, Divine Jesus! Thou art not content to love me with an infinite Love, but wouldst also suffer infinitely for me. O my God! I am obliged, and I desire to return Love for Love, and to suffer for thee and with thee. I desire to love thee without Measure, and to suffer whatever thou shalt please to ordain, or permit to happen to me.

How great, how wonderful is the Force of thy Love! Three long Hours in most cruel Torment, is not too much to satisfy thy ardent Desire of Suffering for us, and for the Salvation of Sinners, who therein find their Comfort and Consolation, and the Remedy of all their Evils. Every Moment of these Hours is to thee a cruel Torment in thy sacred Body, pressing upon, and by its Weight widening the
Wound

Wounds of thy sacred Hands and Feet. But thy Love supports thee under all. Thy cruel Enemies insult and deride thee, every Thing contributes to increase thy Pain, and we, O boundless Love! Love inexpressible! we reap the Benefit and Advantage of it. O divine and innocent Lamb of God! Thou reservest to thyself all the Bitterness of thy Cross, and wouldst that it should be to me the Source of all Sweetness and Delights. O may it be my Health and Happiness here and eternal Felicity hereafter.



H O L Y



H O L Y S A T U R D A Y .

The G O S P E L, St. *Matt.* xxviii. 1.

A N D in the End of the Sabbath towards the Dawning of the Day, when it began towards the first Day of the Week, came *Mary Magdalen*, and the other *Mary* to see the Sepulchre. 2. And behold there was a great Earthquake, for an Angel of the Lord descended from Heaven ; and coming, rolled back the Stone, and sat upon it. 3. And his Countenance was as Lightning, and his Rayment white as Snow. 4. And for Fear of him the Guards were struck with Terror, and became as dead Men. 5. And the Angel answering, said to the Women : Be not afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. 6. He is not here, for he is risen as he said : Come and see the Place, where the Lord was laid. 7. And going quickly, tell ye his Disciples

ciples that he is risen. And behold he goeth before you into *Galilee*. There you shall see him. Lo, I have foretold it to you.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

The lugubrious and melancholy Scene of the Sufferings and Passion of our Blessed Saviour is now closed. Another, infinitely more bright and glorious is about to open. Having shed our pious Tears at the Crucifixion of Jesus, and seen him laid in the Sepulchre; the Church invites us now to repair thither with the devout Women, that, with them, we may hear the joyful News of his Resurrection. *He is not here, for he is risen as he said.* Let us go in Spirit, and see the Place where the Lord was laid. An Angel of the Lord has descended and rolled away the Stone from the Door of the Monument, and for Fear of him the Guards were struck with Terror, and became as dead Men. But to St. *Mary Magdalen* and the other *Mary*, he said: *Fear not, I know you seek Jesus who was crucified: He is not here, for he is risen as he said. Come and see the Place where the Lord was laid.* Without Doubt, great was the Joy of these holy Women at this agreeable News. It is not easy to conceive what pious Transports they were in, when, entering the Monument, they found it true, what the Angel had said. No Wonder they run back in Haste, to tell the Apostles that

that Christ was risen. Their holy Love was communicative, and burned with Impatience, till others partook of the Favour they had received.

Having entertained our Devotion with the sorrowful Mysteries of this Holy Week, we are now to prepare ourselves to celebrate the joyful Mystery of his glorious Resurrection: And that we may perform this Duty as we ought, and be acceptable to him whom we desire to honour in this *Easter* Solemnity, let us take a few Instructions from the Gospel of this Day, and the Conduct of the holy Women therein. From them we may learn what are the Dispositions we ought to be in at this holy Time, and how we ought to receive the News of Christ's rising from the Dead. St. *Mary Magdalen* and the other *Mary*, went to the Sepulchre early in the Morning, as soon as the Sabbath was past. They went sorrowful and mourning for the Loss of their dear and adorable Master. They carried with them Perfumes, and precious Ointment, to anoint his holy Body. They went betimes in the Morning, and their early Devotion was recompensed with hearing first, and before the Apostles, that Christ was risen. Nothing is more pleasing and acceptable to God, than an early and ready Devotion. Zeal and Fervour are the Wings, by which our Souls are raised up to God: But Lukewarmness and Indifference are as leaden Weights hanging at our Feet, and keep us down. Had St.

S

Mary

Mary Magdalen, and the other *Mary*, consulted their Ease and Conveniency, and deferred going to the Sepulchre till later in the Day, they had lost the Happiness they enjoyed of being told by an Angel that Christ was risen. Their Fervour and Devotion is what we are now to imitate, and with them let us repair to the Monument of Jesus. Though we shall not, with them, hear from an Angel's Mouth, Christ is risen. We shall hear it from the Church, who invites us to join with her, in repeated Alleluia's, and the joyful Acclamations of this holy Time; wherein to be backward, negligent, and careless, would argue us as unworthy, as insensible of the Blessings we now commemorate. Christ is risen, and we must also rise with him. We are now to rise from the Death of Sin, to a Life of Righteousness; from the cold Grave of Lukewarmness and Indifferency, to serve God with Zeal and Fervour. In order to this, we must first go to the Sepulchre of Jesus, like the devout Women, mourning and weeping. Their Hearts were sad, they were troubled for the Death of Christ, and they went to shed Tears at his Monument. With them let us mourn and be sad, let us grieve for our Sins, which were the Cause of his Sufferings; the *Jews*, the Nails, and the Cross, were but as so many Instruments, our Sins were the real Cause of his Crucifixion; he died to make Atonement for them. *He died for our Sins.* A just Cause to weep and be sorry for them. *He rose again*
for

for our *Justification*, Rom. xiv. that we might also rise with him. A necessary Disposition to which, is to mourn and grieve for those Sins, to be sorry for them, that our Tears may be turned into Joy, and we be able to say: *I live, no not I, but Christ in me*, Gal. ii. This Sorrow is highly requisite, for us now, to dispose ourselves for the Duties of this holy Time, when we are to bury all our past Sins, by a good Confession, in the Grave of Jesus; and, by a worthy and holy Communion, rise with him to a new Life. Without this sincere Sorrow and Contrition, we shall never comply with our *Easter* Obligation, so as to reap any Benefit thereby. Without true Contrition and Sorrow for our Sins, Confession will be of little Advantage to us. And as without it, we cannot be said to die with Christ, without it there will be little Appearance of rising with him. This requires our serious and attentive Consideration, that we may not deceive ourselves with empty Shows and outward Appearances. Would we know when our Contrition, or Sorrow for Sin is sincere? It has a good Sign that it is so, when we not only make good Purposes of Amendment, but sincerely endeavour to keep them. When our future Care of avoiding the Occasions of Sin, shows that we have a just Abhorrence of it; and when by a real and visible Change, we make it appear that we are risen.

This Change from Vice, to Virtue, and the Practice of good Works, is signified by the

Perfumes and sweet Ointments the devout Women carried with them to our Blessed Saviour's Monument. They did not only go to shed Tears at the Grave of Jesus, but carried with them precious Ointment to anoint his sacred Body. Disposing ourselves to celebrate the Festival of Christ's Resurrection, we must not only be sorry for our Sins, the Cause of his Death and Sufferings; but this Sorrow must be accompanied with the sweet Perfumes of Love and Charity. Charity is a spiritual Ointment, of a sweet and grateful Odour to him; and by Works of Mercy we anoint his sacred Members; and he assures us, that what we do to the Poor we do to him, *Matt. xxv.* This Charity to our Neighbour will be a good Proof of our Love to God, which he certainly deserves at our Hands, having done so much for the Love of us; and if the Consideration of the Sufferings and Passion of Jesus Christ, is not able to produce this Effect in us, we may be said to be more hard and insensible than the Rocks, which shivered and split on his expiring on the Cross. To such the approaching Solemnity will be of no Advantage, while, instead of rising with Christ, they chuse to remain dead in Sin; and pursuing their old Ways continue Strangers to new Life, and remain still under the Power of the Devil. Unhappy Delusion, which prefers Chains and Slavery to Liberty and Freedom!



A S P I R A T I O N S.

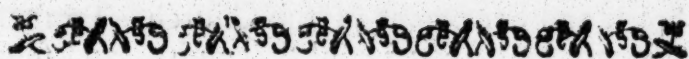
Deliver me, O Lord, from so great a Folly; from such a horrible Ingratitude to thee. May I now seriously dispose myself to celebrate the Triumphs of thy glorious Resurrection, and bear a Part in thy Victory. O Jesus, victorious Conqueror of Sin and Death! May I bury all my past Sins in thy holy Grave, and rise with thee to a new Life. May I weep and mourn for thy Sufferings, and for having been the Cause of them. And let my Tears be now wiped away, and my Sorrow be turned into Joy, at thy rising from the Dead, whereby thou hast finished the glorious Work of our Redemption. Blessed for ever be thy Name, dear Redeemer of Mankind, for all that thou hast done, and suffered for the Love of us. I desire to make thee some grateful Return, by loving thee: And, who so much deserves my Love, as thou? May no Creature then ever rival thee in my Heart; but may all my Affections be placed on thee: O may I love thee most ardently, and serve thee most faithfully to the last Moment of my Life.

This is the least Return I can make to thee, O dear Redeemer of Mankind! and this is what thou mayest justly expect from me. Thou hast given thy Life for me, and by thy precious Death hast purchased eternal Life for me. O boundless Love! O Excess of Goodness and Charity! Ah! what can I

render to thee, O my God! O my Jesus! what grateful Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving shall I now offer to thee? My whole Heart, my whole Life are but a small and poor Return to thy infinite Bounty and Goodness. Yet, such as they are, accept them, dearest Lord, with all that I am and have. May the sacred Merits of thy Passion and Death recommend me to thee, and O, may I from this Moment and for ever, be totally thine.



E A S T E R



E A S T E R S U N D A Y.

THIS is that great and solemn Festival, one of the greatest in the Year, and which in all Ages, and in all Churches, was always celebrated with the greatest religious Pomp and Solemnity. On this Day our holy Mother the Church, calls upon her Children to rejoice with her for the glorious and triumphant Resurrection of Jesus Christ, her Divine Spouse. Now the Voice of Gladness is every where heard, and repeated *Alleluia's* proclaim the Triumph of Jesus, the victorious Conqueror of Sin and Death. To share in his Triumphs, and the happy Consequences of his Victory, is our Part; and it is our Duty to celebrate this Festival with the utmost, and the most sincere Devotion and Piety; that the external Joy, and outward Appearance may be an Indication of those internal and devout Sentiments, with which our Hearts and Souls are now filled. Here the devout Christian will find ample Matter for se-

rious Meditation and Reflection, and to raise up his Soul to God. Happy those who thus celebrate this glorious Festival according to the Spirit and Sentiment of the Church. To such this will be truly a joyful Solemnity, and such may, with just Cause, say: *This is the Day which the Lord has made, let us be glad and rejoice therein*, Psal. 117.

The G O S P E L, St. *Mark* xvi. 1.

AND when the Sabbath was past, *Mary Magdalen*, and *Mary* the Mother of *James*, and *Salome*, bought Spices, that coming they might anoint *Jesus*. 2. And very early in the Morning, the first Day of the Week, they came to the Sepulchre, the Sun being now risen. 3. And they said one to another, who shall roll back to us the Stone from the Door of the Sepulchre? 4. And looking they saw the Stone rolled back; for it was very great. 5. And entering into the Sepulchre, they saw a young Man sitting on the Right Side, cloathed with a white Robe: And they were astonished. 6. Who saith to them, be not afraid. You seek *Jesus* of *Nazareth* who was crucified: He is risen, he is not here. Behold the Place where they laid him. 7. But go, tell his Disciples and *Peter*, that he goeth before you into *Galilee*; there you shall see him, as he told you.

R E-

R E F L E C T I O N S.

What the Angel said to the holy Women, in the Gospel, is now declared by the Church to all the Faithful, *Christ is risen*. The annual Commemoration of which Festival is the Object of our solemn Devotions. At this Time we are not called upon, with an *Eae Homo*, to behold the Son of God covered with Blood and Wounds, cloathed in a Purple Garment, and crowned with Thorns; but to behold the same Son of God all glorious, cloathed with Brightness and Immortality; rising from the Grave by his own Divine Power and Virtue; passing through the Stone placed before the Monument, and filling Heaven and Earth with Joy at his triumphant Resurrection, who having laid in the Grave long enough to prove him to have been really dead, and truly Man, now rises by a Power which shows him to be truly God. Christ is risen, and by his Resurrection, has established and confirmed the Truth of ours, that we also shall one Day rise again: And as he by rising obtained a new and glorious Life, we also shall rise to a glorious and happy Immortality, if we ourselves do not hinder, nor put any Obstacles to it. As the Resurrection of Christ is the Pledge and Assurance of ours; and as our rising from the Dead is the most comfortable Article of our holy Creed, we have great Reason to rejoice in one which demonstrates and confirms the other.

For, as the Apostle St. Paul observes, *If there is no Resurrection of the Dead, neither is Christ risen again. And if Christ hath not risen again, our Proceeding is vain. But now Christ hath risen from the Dead, the first Fruits of those who have slept. For by Man indeed came Death, and by Man the Resurrection from the Dead. And as in Adam all die, so in Christ all shall be raised to Life again, 1 Cor. xv.* Happy Effect of Christ's Resurrection, and which enables us to cry out: *O Death! where is thy Sting? O Grave! where is thy Victory?* *ibid.* Christ is risen. He is risen for our Justification, that we may also rise with him to Glory. But we must first rise spiritually to a new and spiritual Life, which alone can fit us for that Life of Glory. Without our thus rising spiritually, and from Sin, we may indeed celebrate the annual Festival of our Blessed Lord's Resurrection; we may join in the repeated Alléluia's of this Time, but if we go no further, we shall not reap any Benefit from it. We must not then confine the Devotion of this Season to a little outward Show, or external Solemnity. It is just indeed, and very suitable to the present Occasion, that our Gratitude for the Blessings we now commemorate, should show itself in all the religious Pomp and Magnificence we are able; and that the Church should at this Time put on her best Attire to celebrate the Resurrection of her divine Spouse. But to this we must add, the much more valuable interior Disposition of the Heart, and

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to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, join that of our **own**, which ought to be formed and modelled after his. His Resurrection must be the Copy of ours, and according to the Resemblance our spiritual Resurrection bears to his rising from the Grave, so far will it be to our Advantage, and no further. To consider then, the Circumstances of Christ's Resurrection, and how we are to copy after it, will be a proper and suitable Subject for our pious Reflections at this Time.

Two Circumstances offer themselves to our Thoughts, in our Reflections on the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. To wit, that the Life he then entered upon was : 1. A true and real Life. 2. A constant and eternal one. It was true and real Life. *The Lord is truly risen*, Luke xxiv. It was constant and eternal. *Christ now dies no more. Death has no more Dominion over him.* Such must be our spiritual Resurrection. We must be truly risen, and make it appear so. *The Lord is truly risen, and has appeared to Simon.* To rise, and not let it appear that we are risen, is Weakness ; but to appear risen and not to have done so, is Hypocrisy. We must also be constant in this our Resurrection, nor, having once risen, wilfully fall, or die again, after we have been raised to Life.

Christ, when he rose from the Grave, re-assumed his own natural Body, the same in which he was crucified. And it was in his own proper Body that he appeared to his Disciples,

ciples, and bid them touch and handle him, that they might see he had Flesh and Bones, and was no Spirit or Phantom. For this Reason, and to satisfy the Incredulity of St. *Thomas*, he bid him put his Hand into the Wound of his Side, and into the Marks of his Hands and Feet. This Truth and Reality of our Lord's corporal Resurrection, must be the Model of our spiritual Rising. We must so truly and really rise to a new Life, as not to deceive ourselves and others, by false Shows, or Appearances. As the Body of Christ before his Passion, was subject to the same Infirmities of Cold and Heat, Hunger and Thirst, Labour and Fatigue, as ours; but after his Resurrection was impassable, incapable of suffering. We must after, and by a spiritual Resurrection, be free from those predominant Passions and evil Habits we were before subject to, that it may be truly said of us: Behold such a one; he is risen; he is quite changed. He no longer commits those Sins and Follies he was heretofore subject to. He is no more addicted to Swearing, Lying, Drunkenness, Passion, and such other Crimes. He is not as heretofore cold and indifferent, careless and negligent in the Service of God, and the Business of Salvation. He no longer bears Malice, and seeks for Revenge; he is not now, hard hearted and uncharitable to the Poor. Why so? He is risen with Christ, and entering upon a new Life, he is become sober and regular in his Conduct, sincere, fervent and devout, charitable

table to his Neighbours, zealous in the Service of God, and the great Affair of his Salvation. This is the happy Effect of a spiritual Resurrection, and wherein we are to shew a new Life, and make it appear that we are truly risen. Happy those Christians, who thus rise with Christ! Such are truly Partakers of the Solemnity of this Time, which is to them a Pledge and Assurance of a glorious Resurrection to eternal Life in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Another Circumstance of our Blessed Lord's Resurrection, and which we are to consider at this Time, is that the Life which he entered upon when he rose from the Grave, was constant and permanent. Death had no more Dominion over him. Such must be our spiritual Resurrection and the new Life we enter upon. It will be of very little Advantage to rise from Sin to Grace, to make some Appearance of being spiritually risen, and then to fall back again into those sinful Ways we have quitted, and thereby die spiritually, and be brought again under the Dominion of Sin. Having by the Grace of God broke the Chains of Sin, and recovered our Liberty, we must maintain that Freedom, and by Constancy and Perseverance in the Service of God nourish that spiritual Life we have received. In order thereto, we must make Use of all those Means, which the Goodness of God has provided us with. As these are the Resolutions we are to make, at this Time, from our Blessed Lord's Resurrection, we must take Care not to deceive

ceive ourselves, as such Christians most certainly do, who confine their Endeavours to a little customary Devotion at this Festival, and some slight and general good Purposes, which are too soon forgot and neglected. The Way to secure our Perseverance, and preserve that spiritual Life we have now received, is to hearken to St. Paul's Advice. *If you be risen with Christ, seek the Things that are above, where Christ is sitting on the Right-hand of God: Mind the Things that are above, not the Things that are upon Earth,* Coloss. iii. When once our Hearts and Minds are duly affected with heavenly Things, or the Life to come, and our Affections not inordinately placed on the Things of this World, the Desire of that eternal Happiness we hope for, and aspire after, will make us both diligent and careful how to secure it, by a Life of the Spirit, walking in the Commandments of God, and according to the Precepts of his holy Gospel, and on this ground that Confidence, and establish that Hope, which will one Day be terminated in a happy Enjoyment of God in eternal Bliss.

A S P I R A T I O N S.

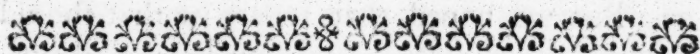
O Jesus, victorious Conqueror of Sin and Death! thou didst gloriously rise from the Dead, and triumph over the Malice of thy Enemies, and thereby didst open the Kingdom of Heaven to all Believers. Grant, dear Lord, that I may likewise rise from the Death of Sin

Sin to a Life of Grace ; from the cold Grave of Lukewarmness and Indifferency, to serve thee with Zeal and Fervour. O may I leave the old Paths of my vicious Conversation, to walk in the Newness of Life, that when thou shalt appear again, at the last Day, I may then appear with thee in Glory. I desire now, O Saviour of the World ! to celebrate the Triumphs of thy glorious Resurrections, and to praise thy holy Name, for all the Wonders of thy Love ; may that Love, dear Lord, so work upon my grateful Heart, that I may sincerely endeavour to love thee again. May I love thee, O Redeemer of Souls, and prove the Sincerity of my Love, by observing thy Commands. May I never more offend thee, nor become a Slave again by Sin, but to the last Moment of my Life continue faithful to thee, my God and my Lord.

O Jesus, my dear and adorable Redeemer ! thou art risen ; thy Sorrows are at an End, thy Tears are all wiped away, and thou dost gloriously triumph over the Cruelty and Malice of thy Enemies. May thy holy Name be for ever blessed and praised, O thou victorious Redeemer of lost Mankind ! May all the Powers of Heaven and Earth praise and magnify thee for thy glorious and triumphant Resurrection from the Grave, whereby thou hast freed us from everlasting Death. Thou hast redeemed me with thy precious Blood. O may I never more fall under the Power of Sin ! Thou hast broken my Chains, and set me free, let me
never

never again become a Slave to the cruel Enemies of my Soul! What shall I render thee for so great a Mercy? O that I were able to make some suitable Return to thy Love and Bounty! All that thou requirest is, that I love and serve thee, and can I refuse thee what thou so justly deserveest, and what thou hast purchased at so dear a Rate? No, my God! I will love thee with all my Heart. I will love thee above all other Things. I will love thee, O Lord! the best I can, for I can never love thee enough, nor as thou deserveest to be loved. I will serve thee, my God! with all possible Fidelity, and never more be disobedient to thee. I will die rather than be so ungrateful as to offend thee. O that I had a thousand Hearts to give thee! that I had a thousand Lives to employ in thy Service! But what I have, my poor single Heart, my whole Life I now give and consecrate to thy Love and Service.

E A S T E R



E A S T E R M O N D A Y.

The G O S P E L, St. *Luke* xxiv. 13.

AND behold two of them went the same Day to a Town, called *Emmaus*, which was sixty Furlongs from *Jerusalem*. 14. And they were talking together of all these Things, that had happened. 15. And it came to pass, as they talked and reasoned with themselves, Jesus himself drawing near, went with them. 16. But their Eyes were held, that they should not know him. 17. And he said to them: What are these Discourses that you hold one with another, as you walk, and are sad? 18. And one of them, whose Name was *Cleophas*, answering, said to him: Art thou alone a Stranger in *Jerusalem*, and hast not known the Things that have been done there in these Days. 19. To whom he said: What Things? And they replied, concerning Jesus of *Nazareth*, who was a Prophet in Work and Word, before

before God and all the People. 29. And how our Chief Priests and Princes delivered him to be condemned to Death, and crucified him ! 21. But we hoped that it was he that should have redeemed *Israel* : And now besides all this, To-day is the third Day since these Things were done. 22. Moreover certain Women also of ours, have terrified us, who before it was light, were at the Sepulchre. 23. And not finding his Body, came, saying : That they had also seen a Vision of Angels, who said that he is alive. 24. And some of ours went to the Sepulchre, and found it so as the Women had said, but him they found not. 25. Then he said to them : O foolish, and slow of Heart to believe, as to all Things which were spoken by the Prophets : 26. Ought not Christ to have suffered these Things, and so to enter into his Glory ? 27. And beginning at *Moses*, and all the Prophets, he expounded to them in all the Scriptures concerning him. 28. And they drew near to the Town, whither they were going : And he made as though he would go farther. 29. But they constrained him, saying : Stay with us, because it is towards the Evening ; and the Day is now far spent. And he went in with them. 30. And it came to pass, while he was at Table with them, he took Bread, and blessed, and brake, and gave to them. 31. And their Eyes were opened, and they knew him : And he vanished out of their Sight. 32. And they said one to the other : Was not our Heart burning in us, while

while he spoke in the Way, and opened to us the Scriptures? 33. And rising up the same Hour, they went back to *Jerusalem*; and found the Eleven gathered together, and those that were with them. 34. Saying: That the Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to *Simon*. 35. And they told what Things had been done in the Way; and how they knew him in breaking of Bread.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

The Gospel of this Day gives us an Account of our blessed Saviour's appearing to two of his Disciples as they were going to *Emmaus*, and how he manifested himself, and was known by them in the breaking of Bread. As the Evangelist is very particular in relating this Appearance of Jesus Christ; so, every Circumstance requires, and deserves our serious Attention, as offering to our Thoughts many useful Instructions, from whence we may reap no small Advantage, if we reflect upon them seriously, as we ought. Two Disciples, says St. *Luke*, went that same Day, on which Christ rose from the Dead, to a Town called *Emmaus*. As they went they talked together of what had happened to St. *Mary Magdalen*, and the other Women, who went to the Sepulchre, and returning, declared that the Lord was risen. Entertaining themselves thus, as they walked along, Jesus himself drew near and joined them, but their Eyes were hindered that they might

might not know him. Happy Conversation that drew Jesus into the Company, and made him verify what he had said: *Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them*, Matt. xviii. Had these Disciples been talking of idle Stories, or of the Faults or Misfortunes of their Neighbours in a censorious Way, Jesus had not joined himself to them. But the Subject of their Conversation was pious: And such ought ours to be, when we converse together. Pious Discourses, though, alas! much neglected in these Days of Coldness and Indifference, is what Christians ought to be delighted in, that they may mutually stir up one another to Zeal and Fervour. At least, the common Talk of such ought to be perfectly innocent, and free from all Slander, Detraction, and speaking ill of others. Such Discourse drives Jesus from our Company, nor will he ever join himself to those, who seek to entertain themselves at the Expence of their Neighbour's Reputation. Nor to them who can talk of nothing but what is shocking to chaste Ears, or about the vain Modes of the World, and of what may nourish Pride and Ambition. Jesus will always be a Stranger to such, as not belonging to him, or of the true Number of his Disciples. Not, that our Conversation is to run in the Strain of those who stile themselves the Godly, or that we should never speak of any Thing but in a Scripture Dialect. Times and Seasons must be observed, and religious Discourse be
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introduced on proper Occasions, and be carried on in a proper Manner. But on all Occasions our Discourse must be truly innocent; no Mixture of Profaneness, under the Appearance of Wit; nor the serious Truths of Religion be made the Subject of a Pun, or a Jest. It is a certain Proof, as well of a shallow Head and weak Brain, as of a vicious Mind, that cannot entertain others, or be agreeably entertained, but by offending God, and hurting his Neighbour.

The two Disciples discoursing together, concerning the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus, he drew near to them; but they did not know him. God is oftentimes nearer us than we imagine. As he is every where present, he is never absent from us. But our Eyes are too often held and hindered, that we do not know him. The Amusements and Concerns of this Life, when inordinately addicted to, and sought after, are so many Hindrances to our seeing and knowing him. The Troubles and Afflictions which happen to us, though they draw him, as it were, nearer to us, and are designed to draw us nearer to him, yet do often hinder us, at first from knowing him, till he is pleased to discover himself to us, under those Dispensations of his Providence, and we come to understand that then he was near; then he was with us when we thought him far off, and ourselves abandoned by him. In many Respects, he may more truly be said to be with us in Time of Adversity than Prosperity; for then
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he calls upon us to walk after him in the narrow and straight Way of the Cross, which is that Way which leads to eternal Life. He asked these two Disciples, what they were talking of. They replied: Art thou a Stranger in *Israel*, and ignorant of what has happened? And telling him of the Crucifixion of Jesus, and what the Women had related concerning his Resurrection, he, in Return, reprov'd them for their being so backward to believe, and showed them from the Prophets and Scriptures, that it was necessary Christ should thus have suffered, and so enter into his Glory.

The Reproach which our Blessed Lord made to these two Disciples, may, with a great Deal of Justice, be made to many in these Times, who call themselves Christians, and his Disciples. They are slow of Heart to believe, practically, those Truths which are contained in the Gospel they profess. Christ has told them that they must tread in his Steps, and that he has set them an Example, 1 *Pet.* ii. *John* xiii. But, alas! they care not to imitate and follow him. Would he let them follow their own Ways, indulge their Passions and Inclinations, and live according to the Modes and Fashions of the World; would he exempt them from the hard Law, to them, of Self-denial, Mortification and Sufferings; they could be easy and satisfied. But what is this but to contradict the whole Tenor of the Gospel? If it behoved him to suffer, and so enter into Glory, has he not expressly said: *The Servant is*

not

not greater than his Lord, nor the Disciple above his Master, Matt. x. Must it not then be Folly in the highest Degree, for a Christian to expect to partake of his Kingdom, and yet think not to partake of his Sufferings? Or why should we be so unwilling to suffer, and so uneasy under any Trouble or Affliction he pleases to send us? This we are assured of, *that our light and momentary Afflictions work for us a more exceeding and eternal Glory, 2 Cor. iv.* And that *all the Troubles of this Life are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which shall be revealed in us, Rom. viii.* Ought not this to reconcile us to what is so much to our Advantage, though disagreeable to Flesh and Blood, and the Dictates of corrupt Nature? In a Word, this is an unchangeable Gospel-Truth: If we will be Christ's Disciples, we must take up our Cross and follow him, *Matt. xvi.* If we desire to share in the Glory of his Resurrection, we must share in the Sufferings of his **Passion**. There is no going to Heaven, but by the Way of the Cross, by Self-denial and Mortification. We deceive ourselves, if we think we can be true Members of a Head crowned with Thorns, and yet will bear nothing ourselves but Roses. For Shame! let us not entertain any Thoughts so unworthy our Christian Profession.

Christ having thus explained to these Disciples the Mystery of his Cross and Passion, they drew nigh to the Town whither they were going, and he made as if he would go farther.

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But they were so pleased with his Company, though they knew him not, that they desired him to stay with them, and pressed him to it. Christ who had drawn near to them, in Order to manifest himself, consented, and while he was at Table discovered himself in breaking of Bread, and they knew him; when he immediately vanished out of their Sight. He had made their Hearts burn within them, while he opened the Scriptures to them; they were loth to be deprived of his Company, and compelling him to stay with them, he rewarded their Piety, by discovering himself to them. Thus God amply recompenses the Piety and Devotion of his faithful Servants. When our Hearts are open, and our Ears inclined to hear him speak to us, either by the sweet Inspirations of his holy Spirit, or by the Mouths of his Ministers, he then makes our Hearts burn within us, and kindles therein the Fire of his Divine Love. It is then, like these Disciples, we should desire Jesus to stay with us, and with a holy Importunity press him, saying: *Mane nobiscum Domine. Stay with us Lord. Quoniam advesperascit. Because it is towards the Evening.* He loves to be intreated by us; and though he sometimes makes as if he would leave us, it is only to try our Fidelity, and to make us more earnest to retain him with us. If we are Indifferent, and seem tired of his Company, he then leaves us to experience, to our Cost, the sad Effects of his Absence, as a just Punishment for our Folly and Ingratitude. Sometimes

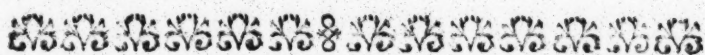
times he seems, indeed to withdraw, or rather to hide himself, that we may not only learn to value and esteem his Visits, but also to let us understand that the Favours he bestows are his free Gifts, not what we may challenge or demand: And by this he keeps us in a State of Humility and Dependance, and preserves us from the Danger of Pride and Vanity. As he has graciously visited us this holy Time of *Easter*, let us earnestly desire him to stay with us, because the Evening perhaps of our Lives draws on. Let us desire him to make our Hearts burn within us, that the Fire of his Love may be kindled therein, and burn up all terrene Affections, all Love of the World, and the Things of it; that as he is now risen from the Dead, we may rise with him to a new Life, and seek the Things that are above, and not the Things that are here upon Earth; that he may one Day, invite us to stay with him, and make us eternally happy in the Kingdom of Heaven.

A S P I R A T I O N S.

Adorable *Jesus*! who didst appear to the Disciples who were discoursing of thee, and didst make their Hearts burn within them to hear thee; vouchsafe to enflame my Heart with the same Divine Fire, and make me burn with an ardent Love of thee. O may I always think of thee, speak of thee, and delight to converse with those who love thee. Stay with
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me, dear Lord, and do not leave me. Let me never be so foolish and ungrateful as to drive thee from me. Behold the Evening draws on, if I am left by thee, I shall fall and perish in the dark Night of my own Ignorance. O may I be inseparably united to thee ! Let not the World, or any Thing in it, draw me from thee. Whither shall I go, if I leave thy blessed Company ; to whom shall I have Recourse if I abandon thee ? for thou only hast the Words of eternal Life. In thee alone true Happiness is to be found ; and without thee, I shall be for ever miserable.

Stay with me, dear Lord, and comfort me with thy gracious Presence, and may my Heart and Soul perpetually burn with Love of thee. To enjoy thy Presence is Heaven itself, and nothing shall be so pleasing to me as to remain with thee. O how insipid and truly empty are all Creatures without thee ! Thou, O my dearest Saviour, shall be the only Object of my Wishes and Desires. Thee alone will I seek. To thee alone will I tend, and do thou unite me inseparably to thee by Love, that I may live in thee, and thou in me, by Grace here, and Glory hereafter.



E A S T E R T U E S D A Y.

The G O S P E L, St. *Luke* xxiv. 35.

NOW whilst they were speaking these Things, Jesus stood in the Midst of them, and saith to them: Peace be with you: 'tis I, fear not. 37. But they being troubled and frightened, supposed that they saw a Spirit, 38. And he said to them: Why are you troubled, and Thoughts arise in your Hearts? 39. See my Hands, and my Feet, that it is I myself: Handle and see: for a Spirit hath not Flesh and Bones, as you see me to have. 40. And when he said this: he shewed them his Hands and Feet. 41. But while they yet believed not, and wondered for Joy, he said: Have you here any Thing to eat? 42. And they offered him a Piece of a broiled Fish, and a Honey Comb. 43. And when he had eaten before

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them

them, taking the Remainder, he gave to them. And said to them: These are the Words which I spoke to you, while I was yet with you, that all Things must needs be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of *Moses*, and in the Prophets and Psalms concerning me. 44. Then he opened their Understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures. 45. And he said to them: That thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the Dead, the third Day. 46. And that Penance and Remission of Sins should be preached in his Name unto all Nations, beginning at *Jerusalem*.

R E F L E C T I O N S.

Our blessed Saviour having, after his Resurrection, appeared to St. *Mary Magdalen*, and the Women who went to the Sepulchre; to Saint *Peter*, and to the two Disciples who went to *Emmaus*, would again appear, on the same Day, to the Apostles assembled together with many other Disciples. His unexpected Appearance among them, struck them with Surprise and Apprehension, and being frightened they thought it was a Spirit. To remove this Fear, Christ said to them, *Peace be to you, 'tis I, fear not*. And as a further Proof that it was no Vision, or Phantom, which they beheld, he bid them behold his Hands and his Feet, and they yet doubting the Reality of what they saw, he demanded of them something

thing to eat; and taking a Piece of a broiled Fish, and Honey-Comb, he eat before them, thus giving them a sensible and ocular Demonstration that he was truly risen, and that in the same Body wherein he had suffered. Having thus removed all their Doubts, and calmed their Fears, he brought to their Remembrance all that he had said to them, before his Passion, concerning his Sufferings and Death, and opened their Eyes that they might understand the Scriptures, and what therein related to his Passion and Resurrection, and that they might know they were designed as his Ministers to preach Penance in his Name, and Remission of Sins to all People, and in all Nations; for the Doctrine they were to preach, and the Law of Grace they were to promulge, was not to be confined, like the Law of *Moses*, to any one single Nation, but was designed for all the World, that whoever was baptized, and believed in Jesus Christ, in all Nations, whether *Jew* or *Gentile*, might obtain Salvation by him.

It is every one therefore that has a Share in the Gospel preached by the Apostles, as being designed, by the Observance of its Precepts, to bring every one to eternal Life. And as the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is the Foundation or Groundwork on which the Gospel, and all the Promises therein are built; it was necessary our Saviour should give these ocular Proofs and Demonstrations of his being truly risen; for as the Apostle *St. Paul* observes, if Christ be

not risen, our Faith is vain, 1 *Cor.* xv. But besides these undeniable Proofs of his Resurrection, the Power Christ gave to his Apostles of working Miracles, and curing the Sick in his Name, is a further Demonstration of it. They wrought these Miracles in the Name of Jesus Christ crucified, and risen from the Dead, as a Proof of the Resurrection of him, who conferred that Power upon them. This fundamental Article of our holy Religion being thus demonstratively proved, all the other Articles are, thereby, established and confirmed : And from hence we may infer, that we are infinitely obliged to bless and praise God for thus rendering our Faith firm and secure, by fixing it upon that immoveable Rock which can never be shaken, and against which the Powers of Hell never have prevailed, nor ever shall. Not only this prime Article of the Christian Faith, but the whole System of Religion built thereon, have suffered many violent and rude Attacks. At the first Appearance of Christianity, the Devil mustered up all his Forces to oppose the Progress of a Religion designed to overthrow his usurped Tyranny over the Souls of Men, and to free them from his Power and Delusions. For this End it was opposed by all the Powers upon Earth ; and by all the Wit and Sophistry of the *Pagan* Philosophers. But Error and human Subtlety, in vain attacked Truth and Divine Wisdom. The Fury of Princes, and the cruel Persecutions they raised
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and carried on by Fire and Sword, Racks and Tortures, served but to render the Triumphs of Christianity more illustrious, and the Blood of so many thousand Martyrs proved the Seed of the Church, which so much the more increased, by how much it was persecuted and oppressed, till at length it became victorious: Paganism and Idolatry were abolished, and the sacred Truths of the Gospel extinguished Error and Superstition.

This open Force of the Devil being thus defeated, he had Recourse to the secret Arts of Falshood and Deceit; and thereby prevailed on too many Professors of the Gospel to adulterate that Profession, to question and deny many Articles of it, and to dispute the Authority by which they were delivered. This Artifice has been, indeed, but too successful, and produced those many Heresies and Schisms, which have disturbed the Peace of the Church, and made those unhappy Divisions which have cut so many off from the mystical Body of Christ. But here we may both admire and praise the Goodness of God, who, to prevent the Danger we may incur of being led into fatal Errors, by trusting to our own private Judgment, and setting up our private Notions, as Gospel-Truths, has established his Church as a safe and secure Guide, with a positive Command to hear and obey her, *Matt. xviii.* Upon her we may safely rely, and to her Authority securely submit. For as Christ, by giving his Apostles those undeniable Proofs of his Resurrection,
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did oblige them to own and confess that he was God, as such he can no more deceive us, than be deceived by us. The Establishment then of the Church, and her Authority, are upon the never-failing Word of God. And as he promised to be with it to the End of the World, *Matt.* xviii. and, by his holy Spirit lead and guide it into all Truth, *John* xvi. and that the Gates of Hell should not prevail against it, *Matt.* xvi. so his Promises are not to be doubted of, as to the Performance of them; nor can they be called into Question, without questioning at the same Time his Veracity, which is the same Thing as to deny him to be God.

The Command then to hear and submit to the Church, is the Command of God: And to believe what she teaches, is a Faith built upon his infallible Word, and is supported by his Authority and Truth. This is a Security beyond all Exception, and frees us from all Appearance of Danger: And ought to be sufficient to satisfy all Doubts and Objections that may be started and formed by human Reason, and the refined Subtlety of a capricious and Self-sufficient Wit. A serious Reflection upon the Authority of God, his unerring Wisdom, and unalterable Veracity, will make it appear contrary to, and everlive of Reason, to question what he has said, to doubt of the Truth of it, or to disobey his Commands upon a supposed Difficulty of comprehending what we are to believe. Could we comprehend the
Mysteries

Mysteries we are to believe, they would be no longer the Objects of Faith, which is an Argument of Things not seen, *Heb. xii.* An Assent of the Mind given upon the Testimony of God and his Divine Veracity, incapable of deceiving, or of being deceived. To act otherwise, is to prefer Uncertainty to Truth: And to trust to ourselves before God.

The greatest Security then we can have, is to captivate our Understanding to the Obedience of Faith, and by Submission to the Church, upon the Command and Authority of Christ, to secure ourselves in that Peace which Christ gave to his Apostles. By this we shall always enjoy the Calm of a settled and quiet Mind, and our Faith be secured against all Attempts that may be made upon it.

The Christian having thus secured his Peace of Mind, by the Testimony of a right Faith and Belief of what God, by his Church requires his Assent to, must likewise endeavour further to confirm it by the Testimony of a good Conscience, walking worthy of that Faith, to which he is called, and which he makes Profession of; for however he may be secure as to his Belief, and the Articles of his Creed, something further still is required of him, to entitle him to a Share in that Peace Christ gave to his Apostles; and which is, not to rest in a dead, or naked Faith, but to shew a Faith working by Love. Good Works, and
a holy

a holy Life ought to be concomitant with a true Faith, for Faith alone will not save us. It will not be sufficient to believe the Truths of the Gospel, unless we make that Gospel the Rule of our Lives, by living up to the Precepts of it. It is upon a practical Faith that we must build our Hopes of Salvation. Whoever hopes to be saved upon any other Terms, will find those Hopes raised upon a sandy Foundation, which will fail him, sink in, and overwhelm him in the Ruins. It is a false Peace we please ourselves in by adhering only to the *Credenda*, and neglecting the *Agenda* of our holy Religion: Nor can we ever expect true and solid Comfort and Peace, while we are not careful to do what God requires of us, as well as to believe what he proposes to us. *There is no Peace to the Wicked,* says the Lord, by the Prophet *Ishaias*, Chap. xlviii. And however we may endeavour to hinder and stifle the Remorses of a guilty Conscience, by Pleasures and Amusements, it will rise again, and prove a stinging Worm that will never die. It concerns us then for our present and future Peace to avoid Sin, and to do Good. To live as becomes those who believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ. To adorn our holy Faith, by the Piety of our Lives, and a regular and exemplary Conversation. Otherwise we make ourselves a standing Reproach, a Scandal, and Rock of Offence to the Adversaries of our Faith, who from thence

thence will take greater Prejudices against it, when they behold our Lives so little conformable to what we say we believe.

A S P I R A T I O N S.

Blessed for ever be thy Wisdom and Goodness, O God, who hast thus shewn us the Way to true Peace with thee, and with ourselves. Thou hast founded thy Church upon a Rock, and made her the Pillar and Ground of Truth, 1 *Tim.* iii. Blessed be thy holy Name, that thou hast made me a Member of her, thy mystical Body, and for that Peace of Mind to be enjoyed by submitting to her Authority, and living in her Communion. Give me, dear Lord, Grace to live up to the Purity of her holy Faith, for I firmly believe all that thou hast taught us by thy holy Catholic Church, in whose Communion I desire to live and die. As my Faith is sound, may my Life be holy, that I may not dishonour thee, by a wicked and unholy Life: I humbly beg the Assistance of thy Grace, that I may bring forth the Fruits of a true Faith and holy Life and exemplary Conversation, to thy Honour and Glory; the Edification of true Believers; the Conviction of Gainsayers, and the eternal Happiness of my Soul. Convert, O Lord, all Heretics and Schismatics, and bring them to the Knowledge of thy Truth, that we may become one Fold, under one Shepherd; and
with

with one Heart, and one Mouth, glorify thee,
our God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Amen, Amen.

Soli Deo Honor et Gloria.

Honour and Glory be to God alone.

F I N I S.



